

MONSON OPEN SPACE AND RECREATION PLAN 2005



JUNE 2005

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SECTION 1



Plan Summary

Plan Summary

For the purposes of this document, open space is land and/or water that is improved or unimproved, and devoted to an open space use. It is important to plan for the protection and preservation of open space as its existence provides many benefits. Open spaces can be used for the purpose of preserving natural resources, managing production of resources, providing a setting for outdoor recreation, and maintaining a beautiful place in which to live. With over 70% of the town's land undeveloped, open space is Monson's greatest resource.

Through the planning process, four major areas have emerged as important, in maintaining a beautiful and healthful environment in which to live.

1. Town Character

Monson is characterized by a beautiful landscape of fields and forest, streams and wetlands, and ridgelines and valleys, interlaced with traces of a varied and interesting agricultural and industrial heritage. Local townspeople share a strong appreciation for Monson's natural and historic character. Protection and preservation of the features that characterize Monson is imperative.

2. Recreational Opportunity

Monson residents enjoy the landscape by participating in numerous types of recreation including boating, fishing, biking, hiking, and walking as well as formal field based forms of recreation. Residents call for maintained or expanded opportunities for all types of recreation especially expanded opportunities in trail based recreation. With much land remaining undeveloped, the existence of myriad informal trails, and a public desire for expanded trail based recreation of all kinds, planning for an interconnected network of trails in a greenway format is ideal.

3. Water & Environmental Resources

Clean water is one of Monson's most valuable natural resources. All Monson residents depend on clean water provided by aquifers throughout the town. Measures must be taken to safeguard the water supply for all Monson residents. Intact natural environments keep water supplies clean and healthy. They also provide the necessary habitat for sensitive animal and plant species. Through environmental protection the dual outcome of water resource protection and wildlife protection is possible.

4. Plan Implementation

Implementing complicated and far-ranging plans such as those embodied by this plan is a daunting, lengthy, and potentially expensive undertaking. To ensure the realization of the goals and objectives outlined in this plan, it is recommended that a body of enthusiastic Monson residents is formed to address the challenges charged by this plan.

SECTION 2



Introduction

Introduction

2.1 Statement of Purpose

This plan is an update of Monson's first Open Space and Recreation Plan written in 1999. The Committee addressed a number of short-falls in the original plan and have looked at the successes and failures. Since the completion of the 1999 plan, the Town of Monson wrote and accepted a Master Plan. This Open Space and Recreation Plan is meant to be used in conjunction with the Master Plan and the two plans reflect similar goals.

Monson's greatest appeal is its natural beauty and quiet rural character. For this reason, more and more people have become attracted to the community. Without proper planning, however, the qualities which attracted many people here could disappear. With proper planning, the town can manage and improve its wonderful natural resources while accommodating responsible and sustainable growth. Monson can plan for expansion of its open space and recreation resources, and begin to seek out funds to remedy deficiencies.

In order to protect and manage valuable natural resources state funds have been leveraged through use of the 1999 Open Space and Recreation Plan. The intent of this update is to sustain that level of state support. The Commonwealth of Massachusetts requires an approved Open Space and Recreation Plan as a precondition for receiving funding for open space acquisitions or improvements to existing facilities.

2.2 Planning Process and Public Participation

In order to update the Open Space Plan, Jesse Greene and Leslie Duthie met with the Monson Board of Selectmen in September to request the authorization of the formation of the Open Space and Recreation Plan Committee to re-write the 1999 plan. This plan was written by a volunteer committee with the support of the Selectboard, the town departments and other interested organizations. Representatives from the major town boards sat on the committee. The final group of people donating their time and expertise to this plan are: Jesse Greene, Chair of the Monson Open Space and Recreation Plan Committee, Leslie Duthie, Norcross Wildlife Sanctuary; Gretchen Neggers, Town Administrator; Glenn Colburn, Conservation Commission Chair; Paul Hatch, Planning Board; Frank Gustafson of the Parks and Recreation Department, Denise Morgan of the Board of Tourism; and Barry Cady of the Parks and Recreation Department. In October the group met for the first time. From November through April the Committee met regularly to work on the plan update. Minutes of the meetings appear in the Appendix.

In order to gain public input for this document, the Committee put together a survey which was made available in January and February. A public meeting was held at the Monson High School on March 23, 2005. Information obtained from the survey and the public meeting helped to steer

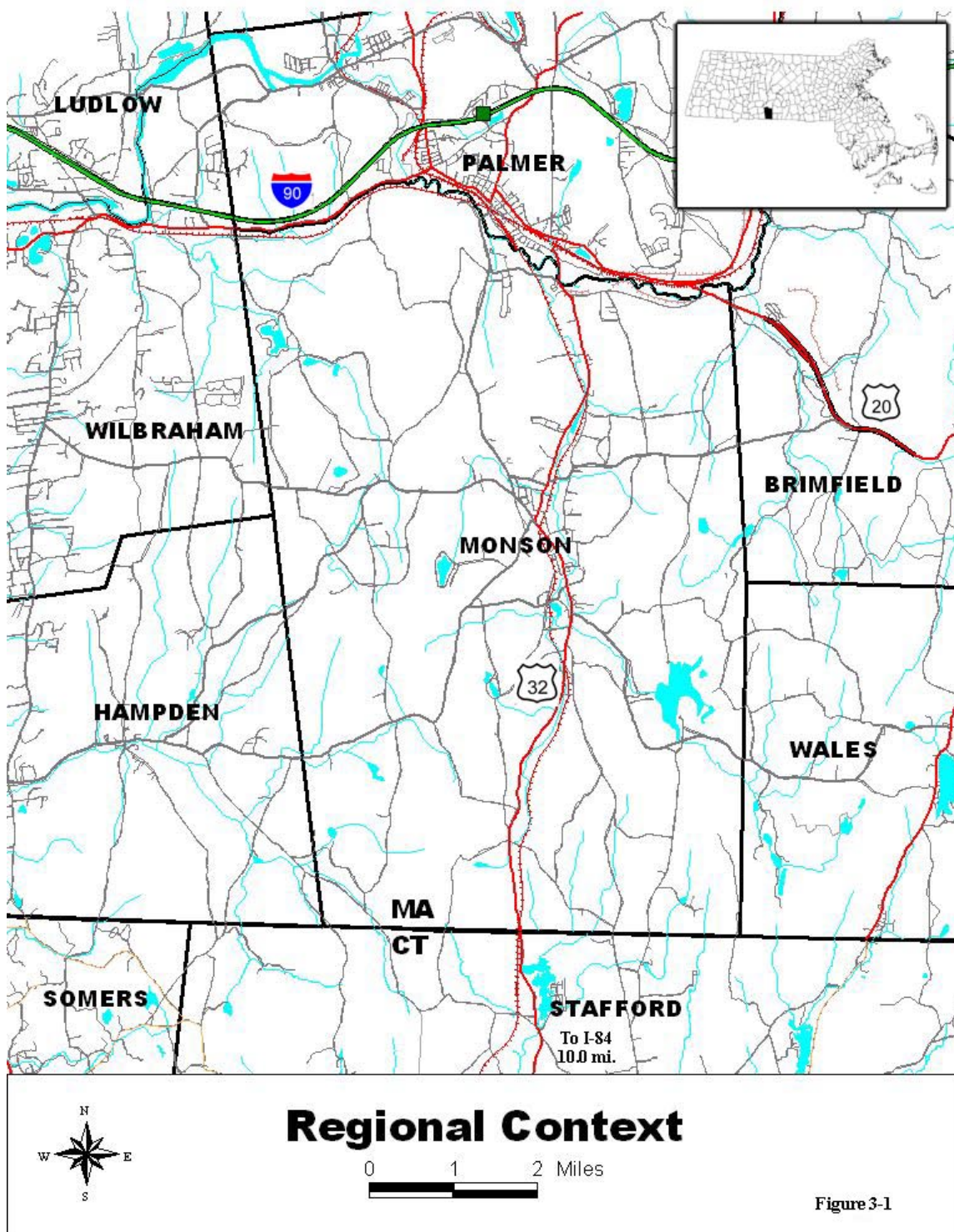
the goals and objectives found in this plan. A tally of the completed surveys and the agenda for the public meeting is found in the Appendix.

Many other people helped with this plan. The Open Space and Recreation Committee wishes to acknowledge these people, and also thank them for their tremendous help and contribution to this document. Additional help came from Dennis and Mary Sweriad of the Historic Society, Hope Bodwell and Christina Gilligan of the Monson Free Library, Craig Jalbert of the Monson Water and Sewer Department, Tim Pascale of Parks and Recreation and Glen Motzkin of the Harvard Forest who graciously provided maps of 1830 land use in the town of Monson. Jennifer Ohop and the Norcross Wildlife Sanctuary provided invaluable help in creating the maps found within this plan. This involved some significant time to synthesize soils and land ownership data in order to create accurate, current maps. David Royce and, especially, Kelli Robbins of the Assessors Office also provided hours of assistance to update and map that shows the Chapter 61, 61A and 61B lands found within Monson. Denise Morgan, of Morgan Graphics, generously volunteered to do the layout and print the body of the text and pictures in black and white. The Monson Selectmen appropriated \$300.00 in order to make color copies of the maps found within this document. Chairman Jesse J. Greene provided the vision and dedication necessary to create a plan for the future of Monson's Open Space and Recreation needs that gave this document its direction. This plan represents many hours of work by the Committee and all involved deserve acknowledgement of their time and effort.

SECTION 3



Community Setting



Community Setting

3.1 REGIONAL CONTEXT

Monson is located in the central southern part of the state of Massachusetts, in eastern Hampden County, on the Connecticut state line. Surrounding communities include Brimfield and Wales to the east, Palmer to the north, Hampden and Wilbraham to the west, and Stafford, Connecticut to the south (Figure 3-1). Monson is within 10 miles of the Massachusetts

Turnpike Palmer Exit, and I-84 in Stafford Springs facilitating easy access to Worcester, Springfield and Hartford, Connecticut. The New England Central Railroad runs south to north through the town connecting New Haven, Connecticut to St. Albans, Vermont. The Conrail tracks run east-west near the northern border of Monson. There is no passenger service available from Monson.

The town covers approximately 28,800 acres, and is bordered by steep, scenic hills that, until recently, have remained mostly undeveloped. Monson's scenic quality and its proximity to Springfield, Worcester and Hartford have made the town a desirable place to live. This has triggered a building boom of large, single family detached houses.

Portions of three watersheds are found within the Town of Monson. Most of the town is located in the Chicopee Watershed, the largest watershed in the Commonwealth. Chicopee Brook runs south to north through the center of Monson to the Quaboag River. The Quaboag River forms the northern border between Monson and Palmer. Southeast Monson is located in the Quinebaug Watershed and Temple Brook in southwest Monson is within the Connecticut Watershed.

Lands of three conservation organizations make up a large part of Monson's protected open space. These include the State Division of Conservation Resources (Brimfield State Forest), the Norcross Wildlife Foundation (Norcross Wildlife Sanctuary), and the Trustees of Reservations (Peaked Mountain Reservation). Much of this land, including Brimfield State Forest, and the Norcross Wildlife Sanctuary (www.norcrossws.org), is located on Monson's eastern border and is shared by the towns of Brimfield and Wales. The Peaked Mountain Reservation (www.thetrustees.org), including Monson's highest point, is located in the southwest corner of the town. These open spaces provide important recreational opportunities to the people of the town.

There are two additional conservation organizations that do not have large land holdings in Monson but are significant potential resources for open space planning in town. Both organizations operate at a regional level. The Opacum Land Trust (www.opacumlt.org), formed in 2000, is a thirteen - town land trust in the region covering communities in both Hampden and Worcester Counties. The Hampden Conservation District, formed by the Massachusetts State Legislature, develops programs that serve the environmental needs of residents of Hampden County and assists in protecting the natural resources of Hampden County.

3.2 HISTORY

3.2.1 The Colonial Period

Monson started out as an agrarian society. The settlers in these earliest days carved out farmland from the forests and built small industries along the waterways. The earliest railroads in Massachusetts passed through Monson and we contributed lumber to build and fuel this early source of transportation. Monson citizens, then and now, have prided themselves on their ingenuity and pioneering spirit.

It was this spirit that urged five Springfield men to settle and establish the township of Brimfield in 1701. Fifty-nine years later the district of Monson was founded when the citizens of West Brimfield complained to the Massachusetts Bay Colony Court that, “We live and labour under very great difficulties in attending the public worship of God by reason of our living so remote from the meeting house”. On April 25, 1760 Monson was incorporated into the Massachusetts Bay Colony.

Situated in a valley between two ridge lines, the rocky, forested land of Monson must have been difficult to tame. Unruly though it was, the land had two obvious natural resources: the virgin forests and the Chicopee Brook. Early settlement occurred on the Eastern Ridge, where soil was the most suitable for agriculture. During this period, subsistence agriculture and dairy farming were widely practiced. However, it was lumbering that stimulated the town’s economy. Trees were used to make railroad ties and wooden caskets. Cedar harvested from the Cedar Swamp was used to make cedar shakes and fence posts.

3.2.2 Industrial Age

Before the blossoming of industry, Monson citizens went to great lengths to achieve the honor of having the Monson Academy placed in the town in 1804. They went so far as to enter into an agreement with the state to settle a satellite town in the wilderness of the northern reaches of Massachusetts, what is now Monson, Maine. In exchange for this service Monson received state grant money to set up the school. The Academy was affiliated with the Congregational Church and was connected with missionaries who had traveled throughout the world. In 1847 the Monson Academy hosted students from China, the first Chinese students to come to the United States. The Academy contributed not only to the town’s culture, but also to its prestige and economy.

At the turn of the eighteenth century Monson began to feel the tremors of the industrial revolution. It was during the nineteenth century that Monson began to break away from its predominately agricultural and lumbering base to evolve into an industrial town. Small centers of industry sprang up in the hills surrounding what is now the center of Monson. Households began to make the slow transition from being units of production to being units of consumption. Young single men and women from many different ethnic backgrounds inundated the town, forever changing its character.

Located northwest from the center of Monson was an area known as the “Silver Street District”. During the mid 1800’s a number of mills sprang up along Twelve Mile Brook. Within the district there were as many as 13 mills, an inn, a general store, and a chapel. Schools were opened in the district in 1818 (Figure 3.2 and 3.3). The name Silver Street has not always used for this early road. It was originally referred to as “the Central Road,” leading from the Post Road to Colton’s Hollow, and Monson’s village center. The name Silver Street was given to the road in the mid 19th century because the residents of the area would pay their taxes to the town in silver.

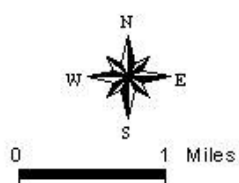


1830 Land Use Map of Monson, MA
From the Massachusetts Archives

Figure 3-2



1830 Land Use



Contours at 30 ft. intervals

- woodland
- meadow
- water
- wetland, swamp

- Stone Quarry
- 1830 Industry, Schools & Meeting Houses
- 1830 Roads

Original maps from Massachusetts Archives, digitized by the Harvard Forest,
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Figure 3-3

This reflected the prosperity of the area where many small mills flourished. In October of 1869 the area was hit with a flood caused by more than 8" of rain which fell in a short period of time. The flood washed out all the dams along Twelve Mile Brook and severely damaged most of the mills. As the 19th century came to a close, transportation had improved, and industry demanded speed and efficiency. The water power of the Twelve Mile Brook had become obsolete and most of the town's industrial development switched to what is now the town center along the railroad, trolley lines and Chicopee Brook (Figure 3.2 and 3.3). Because of Monson's excellent access to the Chicopee Brook, which provided water- power, industry was able to develop quickly. The beginnings of the textile industry came in 1796 when Asa Gates opened a mill on Cushman Street. His company later expanded and produced both cotton and wool textiles.

With the discovery of granite in the early 1800's, Rufus Flynt founded the Flynt Quarry on Margaret Street. This highly regarded granite was used to build many of the public buildings in downtown Monson as well as other towns in New England, Washington D.C. and beyond. The Flynt Quarry also attracted Italian, Irish and Polish immigrants who were seeking employment.

The building of the Boston/Albany Railroad in 1839 and the New London Railroad in 1850 further stimulated Monson's industry. By this time there were also three woolen mills, one of which became the distinguished, prosperous A.D. Ellis Mill (Figure 3-4). This company was internationally known for its fine-textured woolen cloth. The Merrick Fay and Company hat factory was also founded at this time. During its heyday one third of the families in Monson were employed there making



braided straw hats and felt hats that were sold in fashionable New York City stores. Other small specialty industries included factories for producing men's overalls, gold and silver spectacles, and tinware. A few of the old mill buildings remain standing in Monson.

Figure 3.4 Ellis Mills

During the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries Monson was home to seven millionaires! Even though the town's industrial success brought great wealth to the select men who owned the factories, the majority of Monson's citizens subsisted on minimum wages. However the townspeople did benefit somewhat from the wealth. A few affluent Monson men exhibited their philanthropic spirits by contributing to the town. William Flynt, the owner of the granite quarry, built a 200 acre park near Monson's center in 1883 (Figure 3-5). This deluxe park was equipped with baseball field, tennis courts, croquet grounds, a swimming pool, nature paths, a pavilion, a roller skating area, a band stand and three towers. This park remains today, used mainly for its soccer fields, although many hiking trails are also available. The towers and other features, however, are long gone. The Norcross Wildlife Sanctuary donated by Arthur Norcross was established during the 1930's. It still exists today in the southeastern corner of the town.



Figure 3.5 Flynt Park

3.2.3 Post Industrial Age

Over the years Monson has endured numerous natural disturbances on its land however none were as significant as the flood of 1955. Generated by a hurricane, torrential downpours caused Monson's central waterway, the Chicopee Brook, to swell beyond the capabilities of the five dams along its course. One by one the dams broke inundating the town over and over again with each break. Run-off accumulated at a high rate causing significant erosion to stream boundaries. This flood did much to change Monson (Figure 3-6). Washouts and slides plagued 75% of the 105 miles of town road. Many historic stone bridges were lost. Courses of streams were altered. Topsoil and underlying rocks from the hills were washed into the valley. Some buildings were washed away while others were found buried up to their eaves in silt. Damages incurred by the Flood of 1955 were so extensive that it took the Town of Monson and surrounding region an entire year to dig-out, clean-up, and reconstruct. In response to the flood, the Army Corps of Engineers constructed Conant Brook Dam, one of ten flood control facilities in the region. The establishment of the Conant Brook Dam Flood Control Facility provides opportunities for recreational activities and is an important link in open space as it is located between Brimfield State Forest and the Norcross Wildlife Sanctuary.



Figure 3-6 Ellis Mills after the 1955 flood

Monson of today is in the midst of another transition. It is home to only a few specialty industries, the old mill town of years past is no longer. Like many other western Massachusetts towns, Monson has passed its agricultural and industrial prime and is now re-evaluating its economy. Trees that were once harvested for lumber are being cleared to make room for housing. While Chicopee Brook was once appreciated for its industrial usage, this river which runs through the central valley of the developed areas of Town is being reassessed for its aesthetic, recreational and wildlife sustaining qualities. The quaint, rural atmosphere that has always characterized Monson has perhaps been taken for granted as the Town now feels the pressures of new housing development. It is possible that Monson may be able to take advantage of its unique character to attract tourists and compatible rural development. This is where proper planning can play a vital role in guiding and managing its resources.

3.3 POPULATION CHARACTERISTICS

3.3.1 Density

As shown in Table 3-1, Monson's population in 2000 was 8,359 people, an increase of 583 persons, or 7.5%, from 1990. This growth rate is much higher than the increases in Hampden County, the Pioneer Valley region or the Commonwealth. The U.S. Census population figures for Monson include residents of the Monson Developmental Center located on Upper Palmer Road. This facility housed 517 residents in 1990 but only 228 residents in 2002.

Table 3-1:**1990 – 2000 Population Change**

	1990	2000	% Change
Monson	7,776	8,359	7.5%
Hampden County	456,310	456,228	0%
Pioneer Valley Region	602,878	608,479	0.9%
Massachusetts	6,016,425	6,349,097	5.5%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 1990 and 2000.

3.3.2 Households

Table 3-2 compares Monson's household characteristics to those of the region and the state as a whole. The number of households in Monson increased from 2,642 in 1990 to 3,095 in 2000, an increase of 17%. This rate of growth is much greater than that for Hampden County (3%), the Pioneer Valley region (5%) or the state (8.7%). In addition, the number of households grew much faster than the overall population, indicating that Monson is following state and national trends of shrinking household size. This trend is generally attributed to more elderly households, more divorced or separated families, and more single people living alone.

Table 3-2:**Household Characteristics, 1990-2000**

	Monson	Hampden County	Massachusetts
1990			
Number of Households	2,642	169,906	2,247,110
% Family Households	75.9%	69.9%	67.4%
% Non-Family Households	24.1%	30.1%	32.6%
Average Household Size	2.75	2.60	2.58
2000			
Number of Households	3,095	175,288	2,443,580
% Family Households	71.2%	66.0%	64.5%
% Non-Family Households	28.8%	34.0%	35.5%
Average Household Size	2.63	2.52	2.51

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 1990 and 2000.

In both 1990 and 2000, Monson had a much higher proportion of family households than the region or the Commonwealth, although this proportion dropped from 75.9% in 1990 to 71.2% in 2000. Of the family households in 2000, 1,793 or 57.9% of total households were married-couple families. Of Monson's 891 non-family households (28.8% of households) in 2000, the majority (705) consisted of single-person households. Of the single-person households, 283 households, or 9.1% of the total, consisted of single persons 65 years or older living alone.

3.3.3 Income Distribution and Level of Poverty

Monson's household income distribution in 2000 was generally comparable to state averages, although Monson had a larger middle class and fewer extremes of rich or poor than the

Commonwealth as a whole. The median household income in Monson in 2000 was \$52,030, while the Commonwealth's median was \$50,502 (see Table 3-3).

Table 3-3:

Household Income Distribution, 2000

	Households	Monson %	Massachusetts %
Less than \$10,000	164	5.3%	8.8%
\$10,000 - \$24,999	424	13.7%	15.8%
\$25,000 - \$49,999	847	27.3%	24.9%
\$50,000 - \$74,999	747	24.1%	20.1%
\$75,000 - \$99,999	510	16.5%	12.8%
\$100,000 or more	407	13.1%	17.7%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2000.

3.3.4 Level of Educational Attainment

Table 3-4 compares the educational attainment of Monson residents to that of Hampden County and Massachusetts residents. Overall, Monson's residents have completed more higher education than the Hampden County average, but less than the Massachusetts average.

Table 3-4:

Educational Attainment, 2000

	Persons 25 years and over	% Completed High School	% Completed Some College	% Completed 4 Years College	% Completed >4 Years College
Monson	5,689	83.3	50.6	22.5	7.6
Hampden County	295,837	79.2	46.6	20.5	7.7
Massachusetts	4,273,275	84.8	57.5	33.2	13.7

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2000.

3.3.5 Employment Trends

In 1990 individuals employed in Monson came primarily from within Monson (48.6%) or from one of its neighboring communities including Palmer (20.6%), Springfield (5.3%), Ware (3.1%), Ludlow (2.8%), Wilbraham (2.6%), and Brimfield (2.4%).

Of the Town's resident labor force in 2000, the greatest number worked in Monson (26.1%) while 17.3% worked in Springfield and another 14.4% worked in Palmer. Monson residents were primarily employed in the education, health and social services field (25.1%) which is not surprising with the location of the Monson Developmental Center in the town. Manufacturing accounts for over 20% of the jobs held by Monson residents. Manufacturing operations found within the town include Diversified Metals, Lamcotec, Ace Moulding, and Polymer Injection Moulding. Other residents are employed in retail sales (8.6%); construction (7%); finance, insurance and real estate (6.5%) transportation and warehousing (6.3%). One large warehouse and trucking firm in Monson is Lydall Distribution Services.

3.4 GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT PATTERNS

3.4.1 Patterns and Trends

Monson is in the second ring of towns around Springfield and the core cities of the lower Pioneer Valley Planning Region. Wide choices of merchandise and goods are now available only outside the town, towards Springfield, indicating that Monson is dependent on other facilities in the region. This is also true of medical, entertainment and indoor recreational services.

Most of the town development exists around the highways, which run north-south through the town. The lack of a fast, direct link with Springfield/Hartford delayed population expansion of the town for years, but with improvement of local roads and the nearby towns burgeoning with development, Monson has witnessed more rapid residential growth since the early 1990s. This pattern should accelerate in future years as land becomes less available and more expensive.

The natural features of the landscape directly affected town development. The hills broke up the possibility of long, continuous areas of development and slowed the rate of growth. The opportunity now exists to preserve some of the natural beauty of the town for recreational use, rural character and natural resource protection. However, without an adequate plan, insensitive or uncontrolled residential development could irreversibly change the rural landscape and threaten natural, cultural, and recreational resources.

3.4.2 Infrastructure

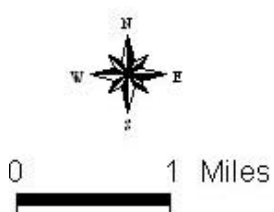
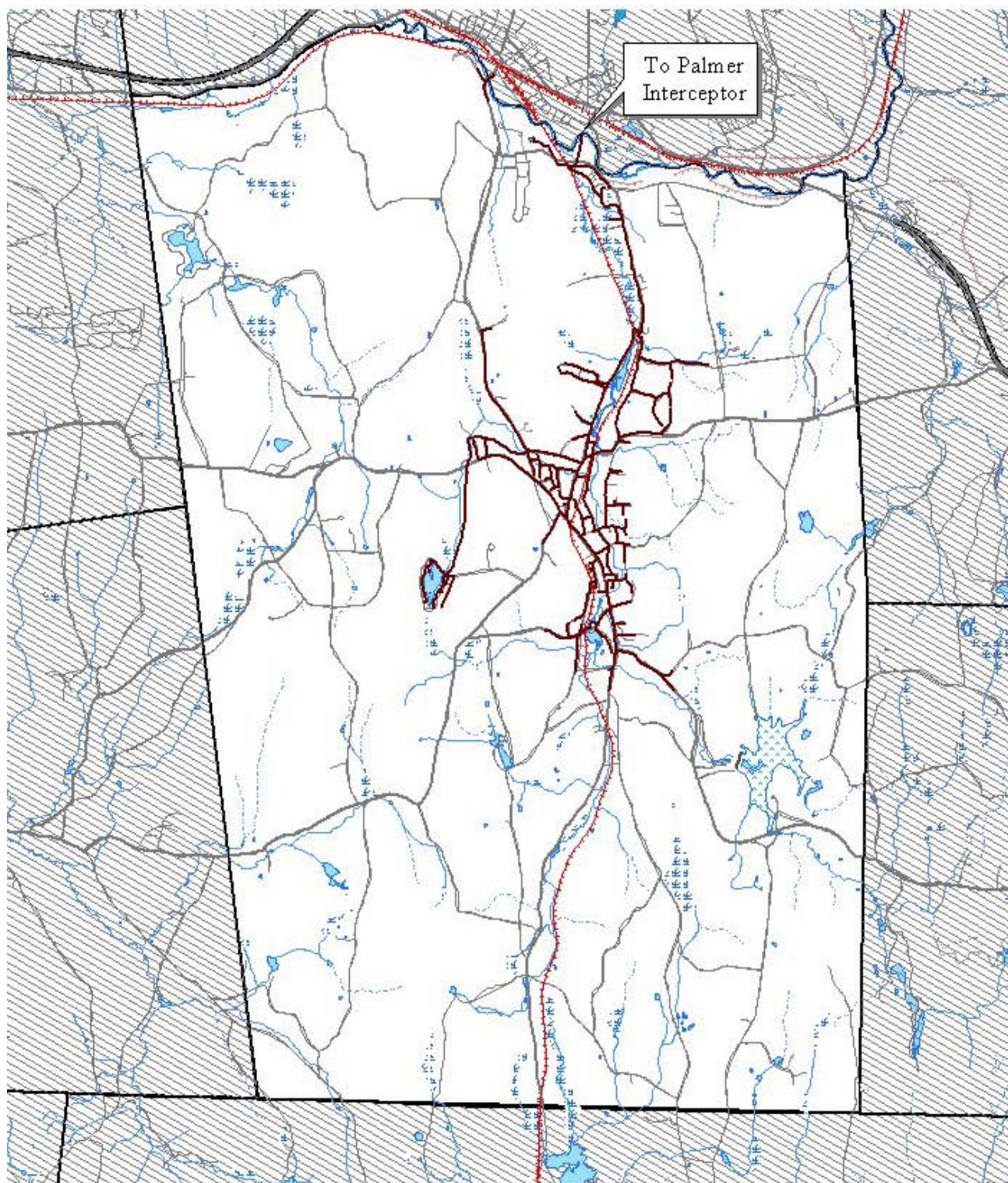
Transportation System

Monson is a part of Hampden County, flanked by north-south ridges which border the town. Route 32 runs north-south and connects Monson to Palmer to the north, and Connecticut to the south. The Massachusetts Turnpike interchange in Palmer is located just north of Monson, providing links to major cities and towns both east and west.

Monson is served by the N.E. Central Rail line which runs north-south. There is one siding located at Lydall Transportation on Bethany Road. Amtrak service runs both north-south and east west through the town, but as mentioned previously, there are no passenger stops.

Water System

Monson is serviced by 30.1 miles of distribution water mains with 3400 people or 47% of the population being served. The water source for this system is three municipal wells located at Bunyan Road, Palmer Road and Bethany Road (Table 3-5). Together, these wells supply an average of 185 million gallons a year (2000-2004) to the Town of Monson. The Bethany Road well can only be operated using a diesel engine at this time and is only used to add water to our system during periods of high demand. Presently, our primary source is the Palmer Road well and it supplies 98% of the water consumed by the Town. The Palmer Road facility is scheduled for an upgrade in 2006 which will increase its pumping capacity to the DEP permitted allowance. The Bunyan Road facility which was shut down in 2002 is in the process of being replaced and should be back on line by June



Sewer Coverage


 Sewer Lines

Figure 3-7

2005. Future expansion of the water system is possible with ample aquifer supply being found at the northern boundary of Monson, although continued upgrades to the aging piping infrastructure would be required.

Table 3-5: Well Capacity

Well	Permitted Capacity	Actual Present Day Pumping Capacity	Future Pumping Capacity (date)
Bethany Rd	310 gpm avg 446,000 GPD	310 gpm (diesel only) 446,000 GPD	310 gpm /electric (unknown)
Palmer Rd	812 gpm avg 1,169,000 GPD	470 gpm 676,800 GPD	812 gpm (June 2006)
Bunyan Rd	591 gpm avg 851,000 GPD	0	591 gpm (June 2005)

In 2004 the Town of Monson took important steps to protect its drinking water supply. The town adopted the Water Supply Protection District Bylaw, the Water Supply Overlay Protection District Map, and the Board of Health Floor Drain Regulation. The adoption of the new bylaws has resulted in Monson's compliance with the DEP drinking water program making Monson a model for other towns within the Commonwealth.

Sewer System

The central portion of Monson is serviced by 27.5 miles of municipal sewer lines, with 3437 people or 48% of the population being served (Figure 3-7) . The Town's wastewater pumping station handles on average 115 million gallons a year (2000-2004) or 316,000 gallons per day. With a design capacity of 1.4 million gallons per day average and 2.2 million gallons per day peak flow there is ample room for additional wastewater flow but Monson's topography creates severe limitations on future expansions to the existing system into the uplands. Slopes over 15% and exposed surface bedrock make this expansion extremely costly.

3.4.3 Long-term development patterns

Zoning

The long-term development patterns of Monson will be determined by the current zoning and zoning bylaws. These regulations influence development, both in its type and location. Development can be excluded or highly regulated in certain areas such as Reserved Lands, Water Supply Districts, Scenic Districts, and Flood Plains. Unless recommendations made in the master plan are developed, development trends will continue to be determined by current zoning.

The overall purpose of the zoning by-law for the town of Monson as stated is to promote the health, safety, convenience and general welfare of the inhabitants of the Town of Monson, and to provide the town with the protection authorized by the Massachusetts General Laws, Chapter 40A. In general, this by-law intends to separate possible conflicting land uses.

Please refer to Figure 3-8: Zoning (Required Map #1).

Although a cluster development option exists in the zoning bylaws, it has not been exercised by developers to date. Under the newly enacted zoning titled Planned Unit Residential Development (PURD) cluster like development is under construction. While there are only a few subdivision developments in Monson, there is local concern that increased residential development is putting a strain on the town's resources, in addition to significantly altering its rural character. A maximum build-out scenario would result in virtually all town-maintained roads being lined with single family detached housing, with a minimum lot size of 60,000 sq. ft. (approximately one and a half acres).

A preliminary study of the net usable land area (NULA) in Monson yielded a result of 75% of the land being potentially suitable for development. The NULA process is eliminative, in that all lands deemed unsuitable for development are eliminated, and the areas remaining result in the net usable land area. Lands considered unsuitable for development in this preliminary study included: already developed land; publicly protected wetlands and river and stream buffers; 100 year floodplains; publicly owned recreation and conservation land (Figures 3-9 and 3-10).

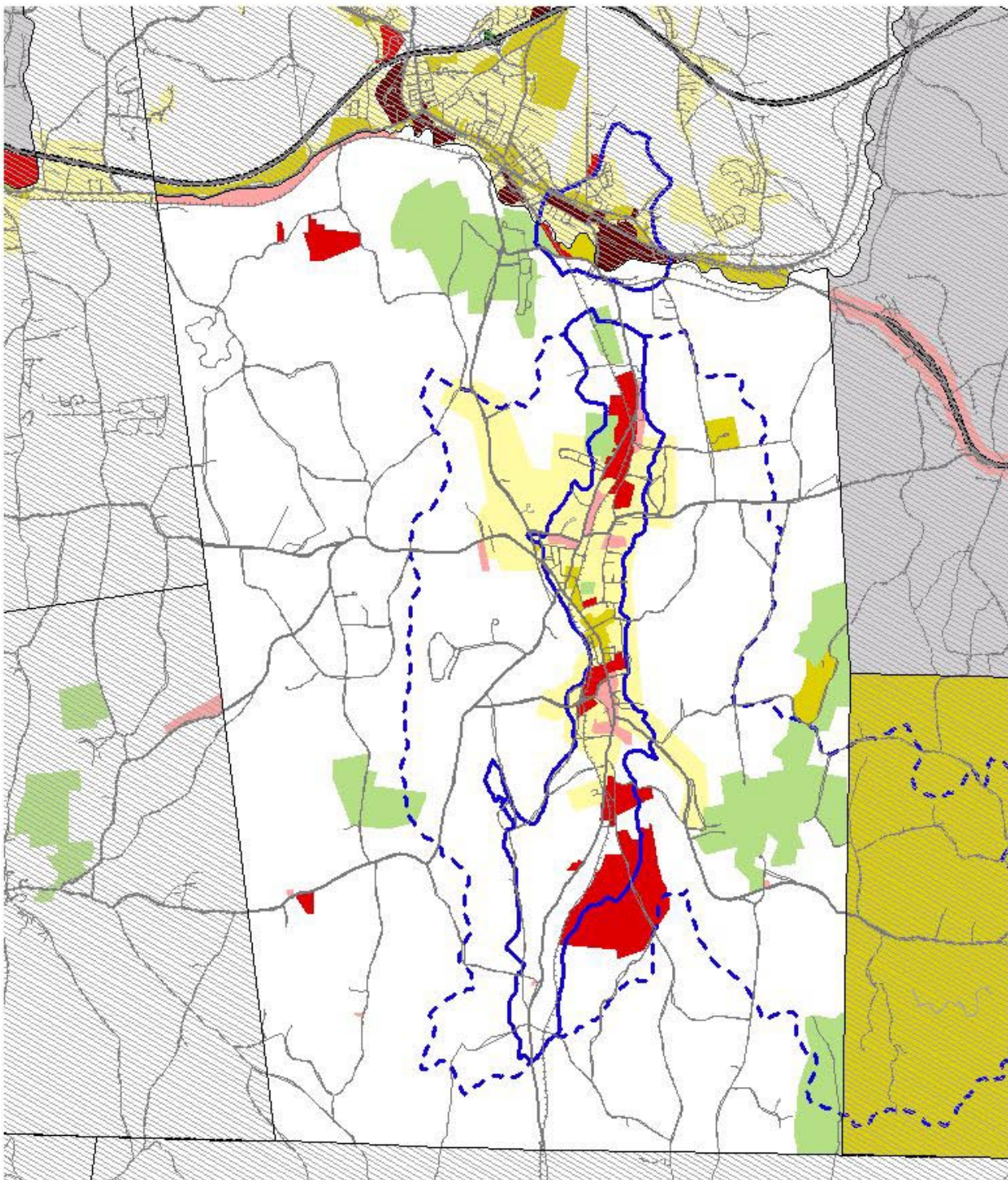


Figure 3-8
Required Map 1

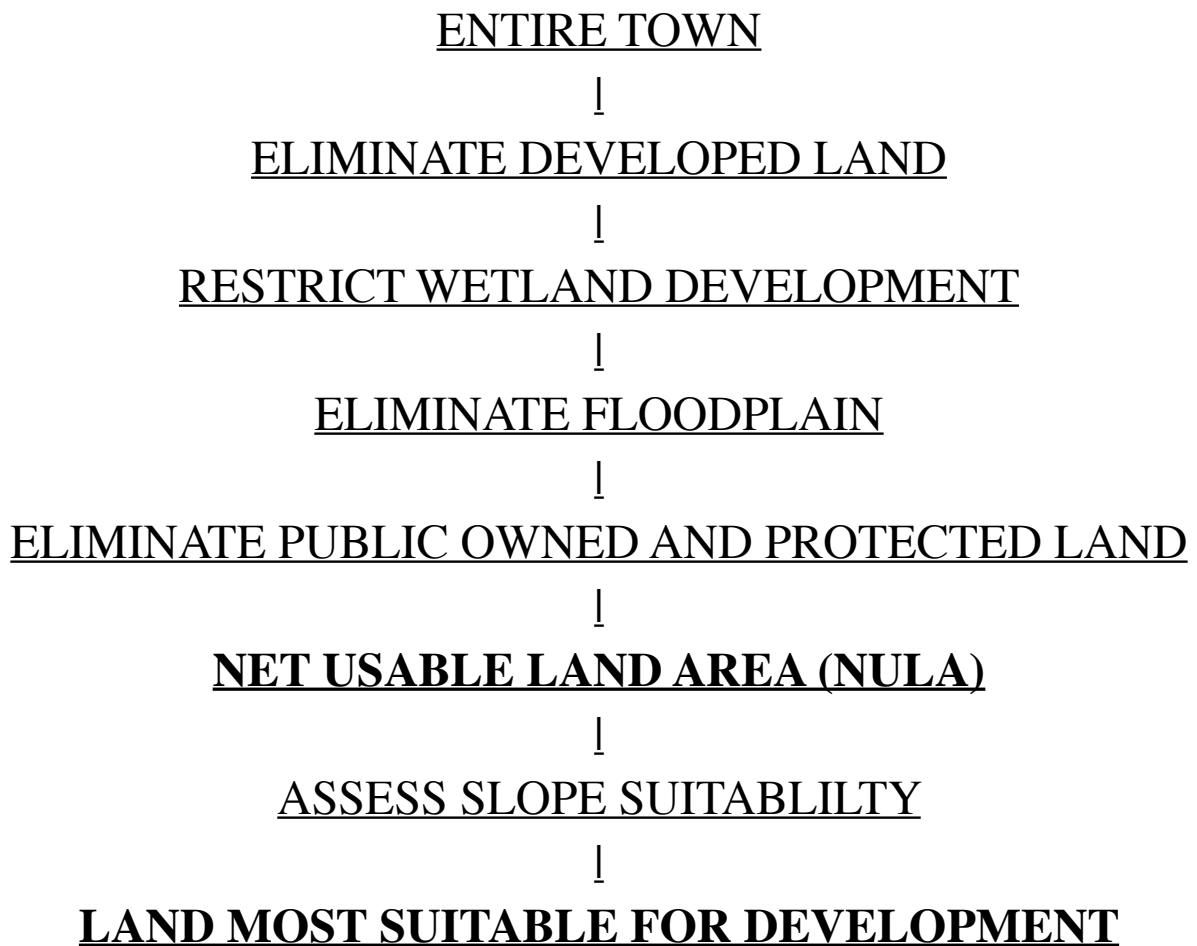
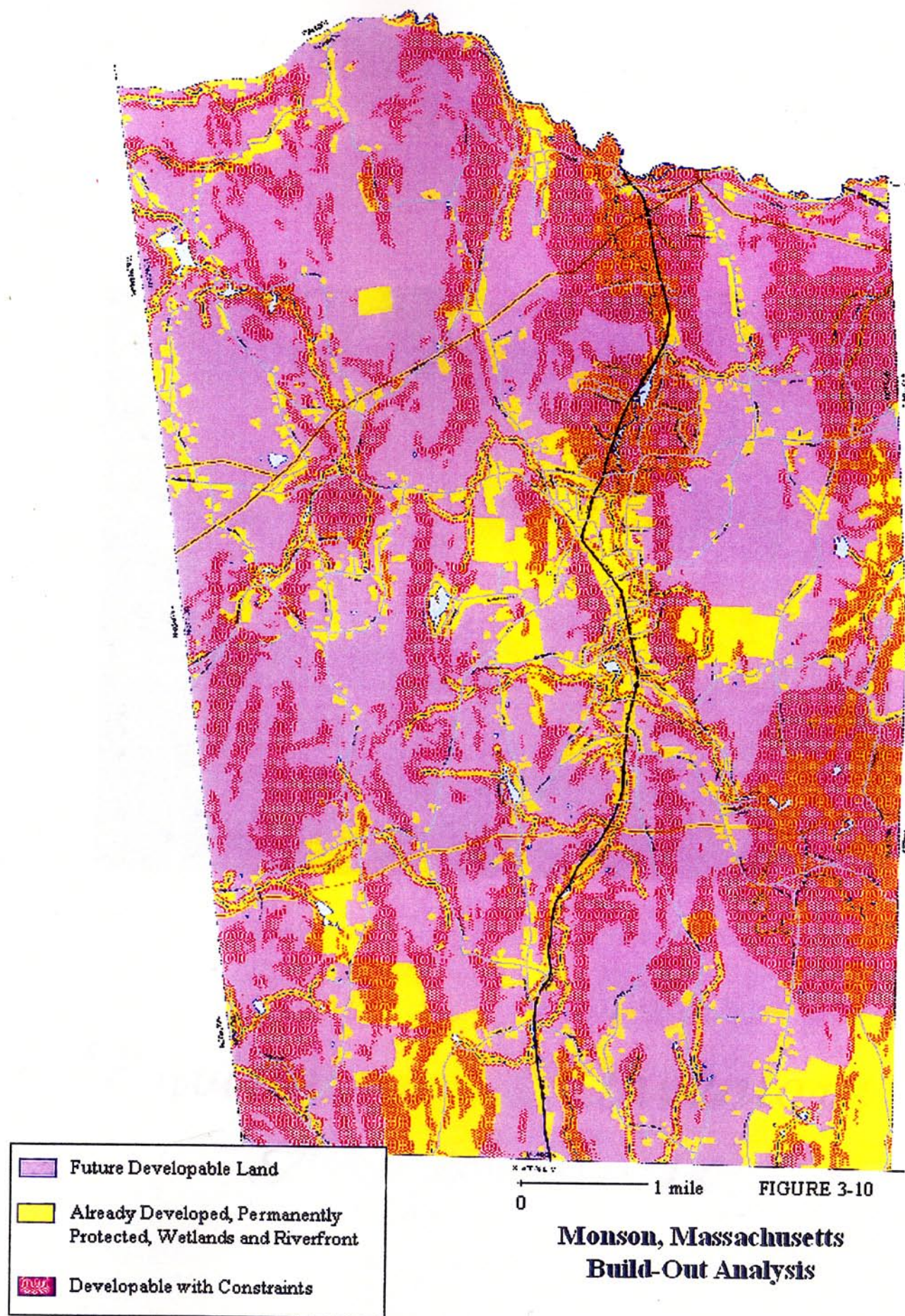


Figure 3-9: Flowchart of NULA Process

Ecological Impacts

If roads and driveways are planned poorly, soil erosion can have a direct impact on adjacent landscapes. The sediment from erosion typically accumulates in streams, rivers, and floodplains. It can become excessive and fill the bottom of streams, which can degrade fish habitats. Mineral nutrients move in solution and with eroded particles, pollute streams. The nutrients, especially nitrogen and phosphorus, may eutrophicate aquifers, lakes, and wetlands.

Additional ecological impacts of a maximum build-out would result in increased fragmentation of wildlife habitat. The process of unplanned rural development produces an abundance of forest edge, making conditions unfavorable for species which require large interior forest conditions. Also, in the course of new construction, forest is often removed and replaced with lawn, altering the types of species which can reside in the area.



SECTION 4



Environmental Inventory And Analysis

Environmental Inventory And Analysis

4.1 GEOLOGY, SOILS AND TOPOGRAPHY

The Town of Monson is shaped by physical features unique to the region. These features create a template which continues to guide the location of human activity today.

4.1.1 Geologic History

445 million years ago, the landscape of western Massachusetts underwent severe changes. Plate tectonics and continental drift caused earth's large plates of rock to slowly move and collide with each other to form our current landscape. The Bronson and North American plates, in the area of Boston, Massachusetts, collided to form the Berkshire Mountains. This colliding and uplifting of plates pushed large hills and mountains skyward. Around 380 million years ago there was another collision of plates. The Avalon plate and the North American plate came together to form the Pelham hills and hills eastward. The landscape of western Massachusetts was transformed under great pressure and movement creating some of the landforms still present in Monson.

220 million years ago Massachusetts was part of the continent of Pangea, the land mass before Africa and North America separated. At this point tropical swamps most likely composed the landscape of western Massachusetts. North America and Africa then began to separate putting great stress on the landscape. This process of tearing and splitting open led to the creation of the Connecticut Valley. As the valley opened, molten rock oozed through fissures. Sheets of lava covered the valley floor and magma stretched the earth and pushed up anomalies such as the Holyoke range and Monson's western hills. At this point in time dinosaurs dominated the landscape. Humans were not to come for another 188 million years.

Approximately 200 million years ago layers of ice, thousands of feet thick, covered the landscape of New England. These layers, glaciers, were formed from snow and ice freezing and thawing without ever completely melting. During this period of glaciation western Massachusetts went through approximately 20 ice ages. The most recent glacier, the Laurentide, covered western Massachusetts about 18,500 years ago. When this glacier retreated it left the landscape tundra-like for thousands of years. Due to the sparse vegetation and frozen earth, this tundra landscape was not conducive to life.

Glacial Lake Quaboag formed in the Monson – Palmer area. When the glacier began to melt, only Peck Hill, Bear Hill and Peaked Mountain were visible above the melting glacier and the surface of Glacial Lake Quaboag. When the ice receded north of the Connecticut line it exposed a drainage divide. Meltwater ponded northward over the Chicopee Brook valley depositing gravels near the state line. Glacial Lake Quaboag reached elevations of 660 feet in Monson. Lake sediments were deposited directly on top of the ice that choked the Chicopee Brook and Quaboag River valleys. When the ice finally melted the sediments collapsed leaving the large sandy lake bottom remnants and esker ridge gravels that are evident east of Rt. 32 at the former Monson Sand and Gravel site. The Monson valley is marked with masses of glacial deposits such as drumlins and eskers. For example, a drumlin, or rounded hill of glacial debris, can be found on the west side of Bethany Road; an esker, formed by a large piece of glacier breaking off and depositing its sediment load in glacial

meltwater channels, can be found on the site of the Monson Sand and Gravel Company on Stafford Road. The First Church of Monson is located on top of glacial lake bottom deposits at the edge of one of the river terraces that drained Glacial Lake Quaboag (Figure 4-1).



As ice continued to melt, additional spillways opened to the west at Bald Hill in Monson, Glendale Church in Wilbraham and north of Palmer center near Forest Lake. About 12,400 years ago the water had receded from Glacial Lake Quaboag forming the Chicopee River Basin, one of the largest drainage basins in the state. Chicopee Brook flows into the Quaboag River and joins water from the Swift and Ware Rivers in the Chicopee River, a principal tributary of the Connecticut River. It was at this time that Native Americans then began to settle in the New England environment.

Figure 4.1 First Church

4.1.2 Geology of Monson

Monson's geologic terrain conforms to a Y-Shaped valley. The valley is bordered by two prominent ridges running north and south on the east and west sides of town. The western ridge and hills are granite intrusions which were formed by a bubble of molten rock which pushed its way to the surface but did not break through, approximately 450 million years ago. This is known as the Bronson Hill volcanic belt. It is composed of Monson gneiss, Ammonoosuc volcanic rocks, and Clough quartzite and runs from central Connecticut to New Hampshire. This belt was near the center of the collision between Gondwanan and Laurentian continents. As these igneous intrusions cooled, they formed the western granitic hills that separate Monson from Wilbraham.

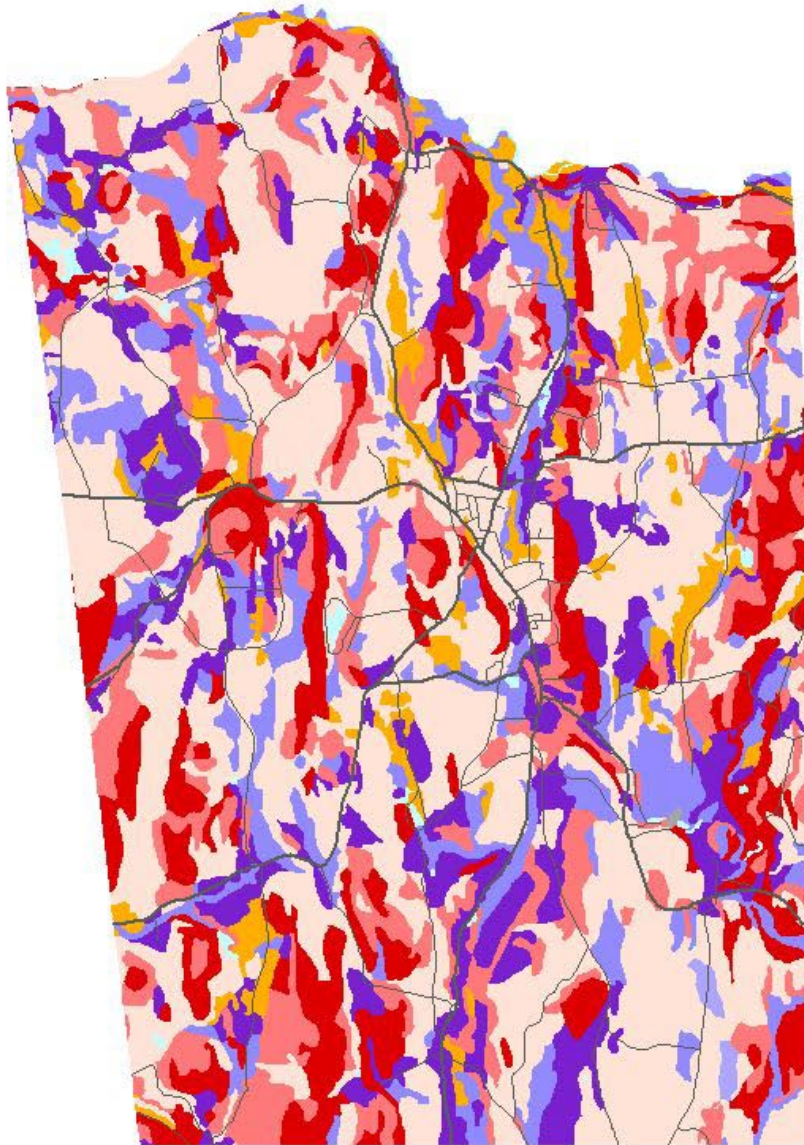
Monson's highest peaks, including Peaked Mountain (1,278 feet) (Figure 4.2), West Hill (900 feet), and Chicopee Mountain (800 feet) are part of the western ridgeline. Monson Granite was quarried at the base of these formations for use in many of the town's historic buildings. The eastern ridge, in contrast, was formed by glacial deposits of schist, composed of granite, sandstone, feldspar, and quartz. This glacial formation occurred when the glaciers retreated several thousand years ago and dropped debris gathered from distant landscapes.



Figure 4.2 view from Peaked Mountain

The soils of Monson relate directly to the geologic forms and slope of the landscape. The composition of the lowland and eastern ridge soils are characteristic of the glacial deposits which were left in the outwash plain of the Monson valley. The western upland soils and their composition represent glacial deposits and erosion of the igneous landform. The valley floor is made up of different deposits of Hinkley-Merrimack-Windsor soils. These soils are found on nearly level to steep slopes and are very deep.

The Hinkley-Merrimack-Windsor soils drain excessively, having formed in sandy and gravely outwash plains, and often overlie aquifers. Development on top of these soils can be hazardous since there is a diminished ability to filter pollution, which may drain directly into the aquifer. The uplands of Monson are comprised of Scituate-Montauk-Charlton soils. These soils are found on level to very steep slopes and are well-to-moderately drained. They occur in areas of loamy and sandy glacial till and are subject to a seasonal high water table after prolonged rains in the spring and winter. See Figure 4-3, Soils and Geologic Features, required map #2.



Development Limitations Related to Soils and Geologic Features



Figure 4-3

4.1.3 Effect on Development, Recreation, Erosion

As mentioned above, development on top of the Hinkley-Merrimack-Windsor can be hazardous since pollution is not filtered before entering the groundwater system. Development on top of Scituate-Montauk-Charlton soils should be limited for a different reason, mainly the presence of a seasonal high water table, in the spring and winter. Development limitations related to soils and geologic features are shown on required map 2 (Figure 4-3).

The eastern ridge was settled first because of its make up of loose stone from glacial deposits. This loose subsurface made it easier to develop, drill wells, and to till the land. Vegetation was also much more prosperous on this eastern ridge because of the loose composition of the earth. Several small, family-owned farms still exist on the ridge along East Hill Road to the north, and on Moulton Hill Road to the south. In contrast, the Western Ridge was more suitable for lumbering than farming, due to steep slopes. Development of this ridge is much more recent, and is taking place along unpaved lumber roads in some instances.

The physical structure of Monson has affected recreation in an indirect way. Since Monson was initially difficult to develop and settle, large tracts of unbroken forest and undeveloped land still exist today. Many residents take advantage of undeveloped areas and unpaved roads and trails for numerous sports, including hunting, hiking, nature study, photography, mountain-biking, all terrain-vehicles, and horseback riding.

4.2 LANDSCAPE CHARACTER

Located in the valley of the Chicopee Brook and surrounded by the rugged, forested slopes of its valley walls and surrounding hills, Monson is a place that is characterized by its out of the way, natural allure. Intricate networks of streams and wetlands wind through the forested hillsides and into the valley. Numerous ponds and pools dot the countryside. The environment is diverse and healthy. It supports much wildlife and is an attractive rural setting in which to live.

A rich past of many layers contributes to this setting. Dry laid stonewalls, an echo of Monson's agricultural past, are present in almost every part of the town. They can be found on existing farms, along isolated agricultural fields, crisscrossing over wooded hillsides, and along roadsides. Numerous historic farmhouses, as well as old cellar holes, can be found in Monson's rocky hills (figure 4-4). While new development is taking place along Monson's rural roads, both wood-frame and granite, historic, buildings grace Monson's downtown core. A testament to Monson's prosperous industrial age, these structures preside as the architectural centerpiece of the town. Steeples and towers of some of the public buildings can be seen when looking down into the valley from key vantage points in Monson's upper elevations. Monson's bountiful natural resources complemented by the picturesque relics of its varied history make Monson an attractive quiet place in which to live. See Figure 4-11, later in this section, Scenic Resources and Unique Features map.



Figure 4-4 Old Oak Farm, East Hill Rd.

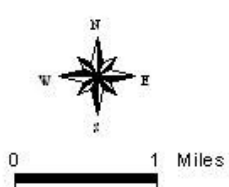
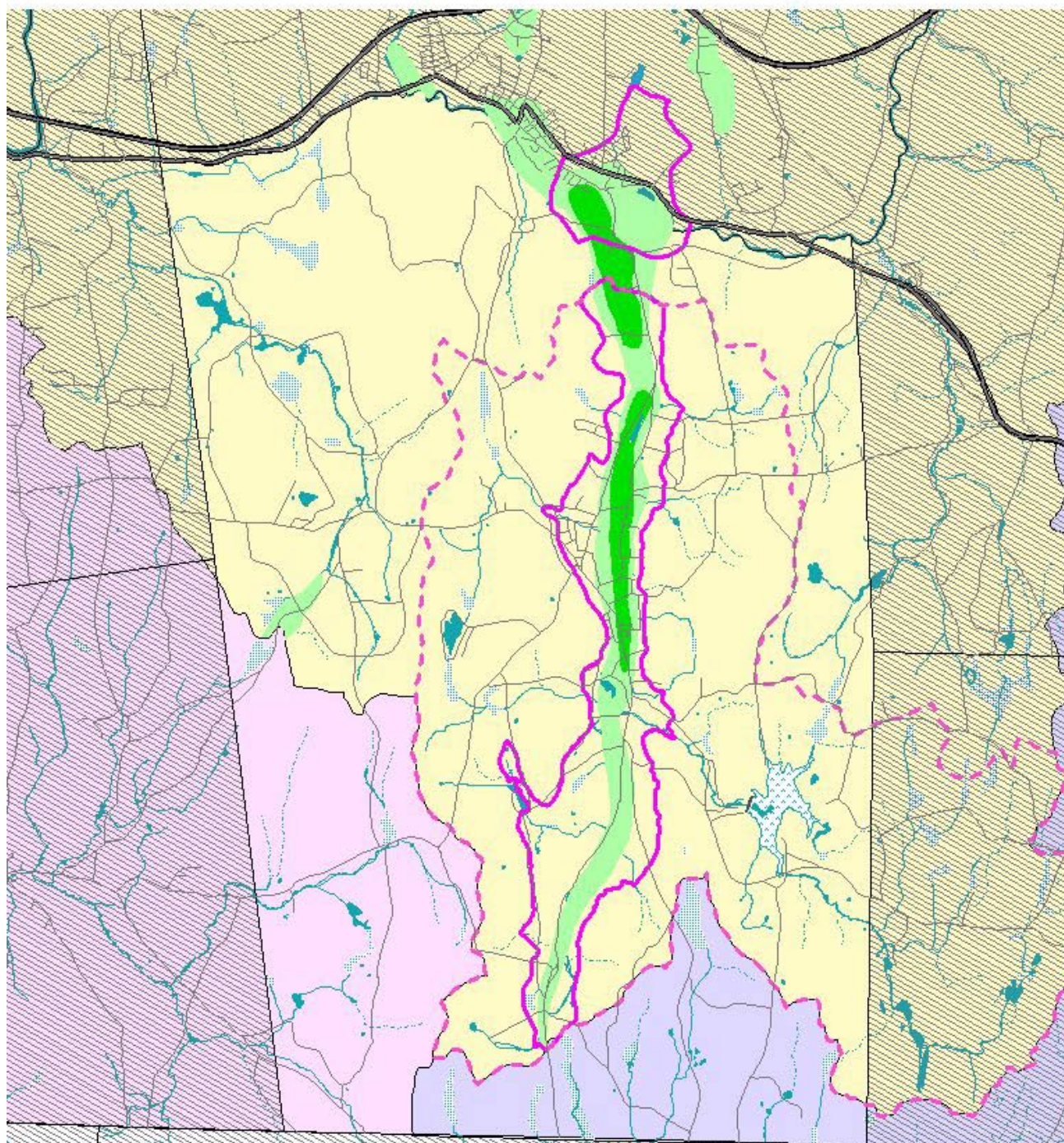
4.3 WATER RESOURCES

4.3.1 Surface Water

Surface water resources consist of ponds, lakes, rivers, swamps, brooks and seasonal streams. Under the state's Wetlands Protection Act, pond, lake and bordering vegetated wetland buffers are set for 100 feet. Streams and rivers are protected within 200 feet of the mean high water level. These buffers are critical to protect water resources from detrimental affects of development.

Monson has an abundance of small-scale water resources that total approximately 133 acres of surface water. An intricate network of small streams and brooks wind through the forested hillsides. Chicopee Brook, Monson's main water body, flows north to the Quaboag River. In the past, Chicopee Brook powered many of Monson's mills and is now a scenic component throughout Monson's downtown core. The Quaboag River forms the northern boundary between Monson and Palmer. Kayaking and canoeing on the Quaboag is possible however access to the river is limited at this time.

In addition to its streams and brooks, Monson has many small ponds and lakes. Privately owned and controlled by local lake associations, Pulpit Rock Lake, Stagecoach Lake, and Paradise Lake offer association members small beach areas for swimming and boating. None of the ponds and lakes accommodates powerboats. Conant Brook Dam, a flood control facility managed by the Army Corps of Engineers, is an important public recreational facility. The 300 acre reservation offers a beautiful streamside environment along the Conant and Vinica brooks. Anglers enjoy excellent trout fishing below the dam, while warm water fishermen enjoy the waters above the dam. Horseback riders, hikers and cross-country skiers utilize the miles of trails that the reservation provides. Hunting is also popular among park visitors by permit in season.



Water Resources

Aquifer Recharge & Watershed Basins

Aquifers

- High Yield
- Medium Yield

Wellhead Protection Zones

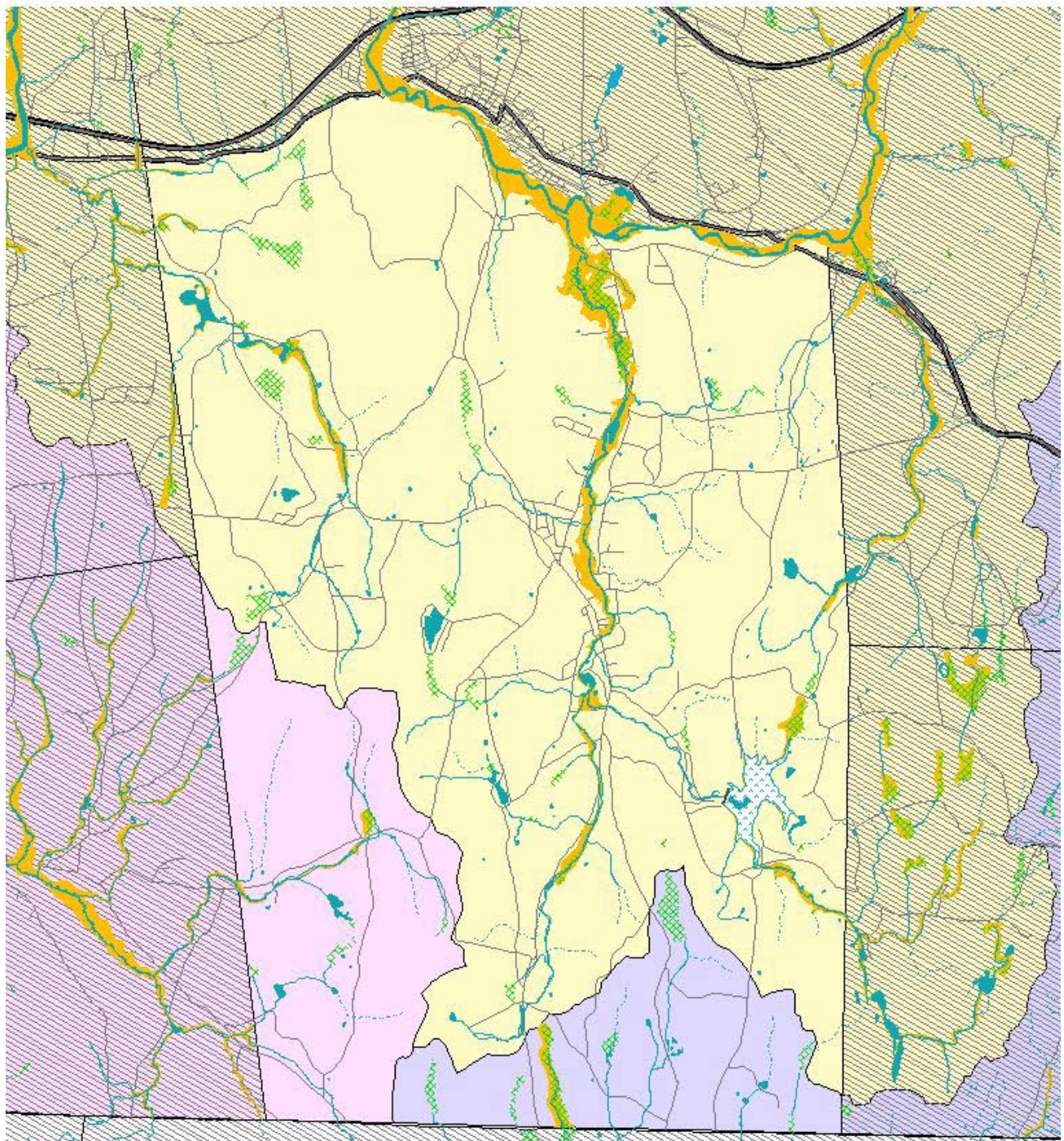
- Zone III
- Zone II

Major River Basins

- Chicopee
- Connecticut
- Quinebaug

Figure 4-5

Part of Required Map 4



Water Resources

FEMA, Surface Water & Wetlands

- | | |
|---------------------|----------------|
| FEMA Flood Zones | Lakes & Ponds |
| Perennial Stream | Wetland |
| Intermittent Stream | Inundated Area |

- Major River Basins
- | |
|-------------|
| Chicopee |
| Connecticut |
| Quinebaug |

Figure 4-4
Part of Required Map 4

4.3.2 Aquifer Recharge Areas

The main aquifer recharge area in Monson lies beneath the central valley and the Hickley Merrimack-Windsor soils. Monson's town wells are currently located in this area. Should the current water system be expanded, there is an excellent aquifer recharge area in this central valley near the Palmer border. This site is in close proximity to existing water lines. An addition to the existing water system would be feasible. A secondary aquifer recharge area has been denoted on the aquifer recharge map (Figure 4-5 Water Resources: Aquifer Recharge & Watershed Basins) along the western border of the town. This area, however, is not close to any of the existing piping used for the town's current water supply.

4.3.3 Flood Hazard

A 100 year flood plain has been mapped by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) for several (but not all) water bodies in Monson. Flooding as a result of heavy rains and a hurricane in August 1955 precipitated the construction of the Conant Brook Dam, which is also a federally-owned public recreation area in the Town. Twelve-mile Brook, Conant Brook Reservoir, Temple Brook, Chicopee Brook, and the Quaboag River all present a potential flood hazard as outlined by FEMA (Figure 4-6 Water Resources: FEMA, Surface Water & Wetlands).

4.3.4 Wetlands

Wetlands have values for humans and wildlife that are important to protect. These values include: Protection of public and private water supply, protection of ground water supply, flood control, storm damage prevention, prevention of pollution, protection of land containing shellfish, protection of fisheries, and protection of wildlife habitat. They play a major role in the landscape by providing unique habitat for a wide variety of flora and fauna. They can be thought of as "biological supermarkets" because of the extensive food chain and rich biodiversity that they support. On a global scale, wetlands have been termed "carbon-dioxide sinks" and climate stabilizers. The Monson Conservation Commission is responsible for protecting the values that our wetlands provide by applying the regulations set forth by the Wetlands Protection Act.

Monson's soil is largely composed of glacial till, a heterogeneous mixture of clay, silt, sand and gravel deposited by glacial ice. Wetlands occur frequently on this unsorted soil mixture as it is not very permeable. This, in conjunction with the number of streams and brooks which flow and drain in these areas of glacial deposits, make wetlands a common landscape feature in Monson. The soils and ample water supplies also support numerous vernal pools found throughout the town. Vernal pools are unique and important landscape features that provide wildlife habitat, aid in flood prevention, and aquifer recharge.

Monson's cedar swamp, located southeast corner is a white cedar wetland. These wetlands are unusual with only a few found throughout the Commonwealth. Cedar Swamp is owned by the Monson Conservation Commission.

4.4 VEGETATION

4.4.1 General Inventory

The Town of Monson has vegetative cover types that are consistent with the surrounding region. The landscape of Monson is typical of the other towns in the area, with large uninterrupted patches of secondary and mature growth forests, agricultural lands consisting of crop and pasture lands, forested wetlands, fragmented tree and shrub canopies from residential development, and the ecotones that connect these vegetative covers. This diverse vegetation matrix is one of the town's most valuable resources and should be considered a major component of the Open Space and Recreation Plan.

An analysis of the most recent vegetation mapping for the Town shows that approximately 75% of the land is forested. Much of this land is adjacent to forested areas in neighboring towns. These large patches and connections to the region are very important for the planning of open space from a regional perspective. They allow for a flexible management plan that will satisfy a wide variety of uses and activities.

The forests in Monson are diverse both horizontally and vertically within the community. This is primarily due to historical land management practices such as timber harvesting and the abandonment of agricultural fields. The differences in tree heights vary from successional and second growth to mature forests. This vertical diversity provides for many types of habitats including ground, shrub, understory, and canopy layers. Thus, a wide variety of species can be supported.

Horizontally, the forests also form a very diverse mosaic, which for simplicity can be grouped into three main categories: 1. Hardwoods, such as maples (*Acer*), ash (*Fraxinus*), oak (*Quercus*), beech (*Fagus*), and birches (*Betula*); 2. the Softwoods including pine (*Pinus*), and hemlock (*Tsuga*); and 3. Mixed hardwood/softwood patches. This mosaic is another key determinant of the habitat variety within Monson.

The dense forests in Monson provide other ecological benefits in addition to species richness. Monson's forested slopes must be managed correctly to minimize soil erosion. Soil stability is also an extremely important factor in a healthy ecosystem. The carbon cycle and the hydrologic cycle are both important ecosystem processes that depend on vegetative cover for their proper functioning. Reducing vegetative cover in forested areas can affect the natural "sheet flow" of water down streams, gullies, and through soil substrate. This would cause excessive water to flow into lower terrain, increasing flood potential, and reducing water quality.

The vegetative covers of the wetlands, riverine, and lacustrine areas in Monson are typical of wetland and water bodies in western Massachusetts. These areas increase the overall biodiversity of the Town and region by providing a great variety of important habitat types. The vegetation that border's these shores and grows in these waters are important to the health of the water bodies. It also provides crucial habitat for edge species where water and land meet. This habitat is enhanced because the plants that grow there reduce bank erosion and keep the nutrient and oxygen levels of the water in balance. Water quality affects several aquifer recharge systems that the town relies on for drinking water. It also affects the health and safety of recreational activities like fishing and swimming.

Pasture and agricultural lands are also important open space areas for Monson. These patches of grasses and crops are less important for specialized interior species, but they do accommodate the majority of game species, both within them and along their edges. Pastures also provide important habitat for many bird and insect species, which are important to the residents who enjoy observing wildlife as recreation. These values underscore the benefits of keeping existing farmland in production and maintaining pasture lands. They are important as a food source, for recreation, and for their visual character. Meadowland and pasture in Monson which is not periodically cut or grazed, quickly returns to forest.



The cover types described here are important visual components of the town's scenic character and its connection to the New England landscape. The backdrop of forest against agricultural land is part of what makes New England a special region. Walking on the back roads and hiking through forests are very enjoyable recreational experiences in Monson.

Figure 4-7
central valley of Monson

Until recently, woods, fields, streams, and wetlands have been minimally affected by development. Increased growth and development, however, has begun to change things. Fields near the downtown area that were valued for their scenic quality and recreational value have been subdivided to make way for housing. Increased development along roads has altered their scenic character. This is an evolving process. The current changes are more permanent than some of the previous land use changes.

The hillside roads that wind through the town's forests offer scenic vistas and pleasant settings for excursions on foot, bicycle, or by car. Beautiful overlooks can be found on many ridges. Likewise the ridges can often be glimpsed from the valley (Figure 4-7, 4-8). Recreational opportunities in the



town's forests are abundant. With proper planning, a wide range of active and passive recreation can coexist in these large patches. The pasture lands and forest edges that support many game species are important as many residents enjoy hunting and/or benefit from revenues from hunting. The interior forests are also important for some upland game species like turkey, bear and song birds.

Figure 4-8 Chicopee Mountain

The maturing upland forests are excellent for hiking; as the trees age and form dense canopies, the understory species diminish leaving clear areas for trails. The larger tracts of forest allow

recreational trails to extend outside the town and into a regional system. The thicker mature softwood stands have relatively complete canopies that limit snow levels beneath them. These are good winter corridors for both people and wildlife and ideal for winter walking trails. The open canopy of the hardwood species allows the snow to build up to adequate levels for skiing, and snow shoeing.

Wetland vegetation around shorelines is also important for recreation. These plants stabilize banks, permitting paths to pass close to shorelines where people prefer to walk. By reducing erosion, these plants also provide habitat for popular game fish like pike, small mouth bass, pickerel, and panfish. These fish are favorites of summer and winter anglers, and indirectly bring revenue to local businesses. Fallen logs and brush piles along the waters edge also provide habitat for some avian species that are valued by bird watchers and hunters. Nesting sites are generally in hidden locations and require this coverage to protect offspring from predators and human disturbances.

4.4.2 Rare, Threatened, and Endangered Species

The Atlantic White Cedar Swamp is a threatened natural community. It is ranked S2, meaning that there are only between 6 and 20 of these community types found in the Commonwealth. They are forested wetlands dominated by Atlantic White Cedar (*Chamaecyparis thyoides*) with Hemlock, Spruce, Red Maple and Yellow Birch. This is key habitat for the rare Spatterdock Darner dragonfly and significant habitat for rare turtles and salamanders. Monson has the second-highest quality Inland Atlantic White Cedar Swamp in the state. The Cedar Swamp is owned by the Conservation Commission, and some of the surrounding lands are owned by the Norcross Wildlife Foundation. It will be important to protect the riparian habitats and the connections between existing conservation lands around this beautiful natural resource.

There are several other species of plants listed by the Natural Heritage and Endangered Species Program. Slender Blue Eyed Grass (*Sisyrinchium mucronatum*), Climbing Fern (*Lygodium palmatum*), and Golden Club (*Orontium aquaticum*) can be found within the town.

4.5 FISHERIES AND WILDLIFE

4.5.1 Inventory

Monson contains a significant amount of upland and wetland wildlife habitat. The forests of the town consist of large unbroken tracts of mature forest that allow for good species movement within Monson and the surrounding region. The habitat for terrestrial species in Monson has been increasing recently due to the natural reforestation on abandoned agricultural lands. As a result, some interior animal species such as deer, bear, coyote, and fisher that require large tracts of land are also increasing. The town still has a number of agricultural areas that provide an important ecological component for the maintenance of edge species – those species that use this transitional zone or ecotone as their habitat. With the demise of the few remaining working farms in the town, the amount of edge habitat has been dwindling. Preserving edge habitat or creating new edge habitat should be a consideration if the town is to maintain its diverse mix of wildlife. Edge habitat, areas where open fields and large forest tracts come together, provides exceptional, high quality wildlife habitat and biodiversity.

Monson also contains an extensive network of streams, rivers, forested and open water bodies. These including Cedar Swamp, Conant Brook, Paradise Lake, Chicopee Brook, Pulpit Rock Lake, and Twelve Mile Brook. These important ecosystems house large numbers of aquatic species that add to the town's overall species richness. Trout can be found in the town's cool streams. Bass, pickerel, and assorted pan fish are abundant in the warmer pond waters. The combination of these landscape components in the town's rural matrix of wetlands, forests, and, unique visual characteristics provide abundant recreational opportunities.

Monson supports and abundance of wetland and upland species. Species diversity is greatest where several habitat types co-occur . In order to assess the quality of wetland and upland habitat currently present in Monson, two species of birds were selected as target species: the belted kingfisher (*Megascops asio*) to represent riparian areas and the red-tailed hawk (*Buteo jamaicensis*) to represent wooded uplands. The selection of birds as target species is based on two factors. First, no other habitat association in North America is believed to be as important as riparian wetlands for non-colonial nesting birds. More than 250 species of birds use riparian habitats. Secondly, the abundance, diversity and distribution of birds as well as the specific requirements of each reflect the existing plant structure and thus give information about habitat quality and quantity, Furthermore, birds are a highly valued form of urban and rural wildlife, which may increase public support for management of their habitats.

In assessing whether suitable habitat exists in Monson for both the kingfisher and the red tailed hawk, the first step consisted of studying available habitat, marked by vegetation, the vegetation types required by the belted kingfisher are streams, rivers, ponds, lakes, marshes, shrub swamps and forested wetlands (conifer and deciduous) and for the red tailed hawk northern hardwoods (sugar maple, white pine, red oak, red maple, beech, ash, birch), and northern red oak. These vegetation types were aggregated into one category for each target species. The next step was to select all areas which fulfill the estimated minimum habitat size requirements of the target species. The minimum area for the red tailed hawk is 10 acres and for the belted kingfisher one kilometer of shoreline. In the case of the belted kingfisher, proximity to the ponds of Monson and the Quaboag River was also taken into account. Areas with development less than 200 feet away from the river are not considered potential kingfisher habitat because of their kingfisher's sensitivity to human disturbance during the breeding season.

In Monson, populations of the red tailed hawk and of the belted kingfisher are healthy. The town can assume that the areas where they are found are fairly healthy and do support most if not all of the other species generally associated with wetlands and forests.

4.5.2 Corridors

As Monson experiences more development along its' roads, previously large tracts of land are becoming fragmented. Riparian corridors are used as travel routes by numerous species of animals. Protection of these riverfront areas should be a priority at all times, but especially when these corridors can provide a link between two otherwise separate habitats.

There are many areas of protected open space throughout the town. The town may consider linking

some of these protected areas through agreements with landowners or selective purchases. Maintaining connection between large undeveloped tracts of land increases the quality of the habitat for species that require a deep woods, more remote territory.

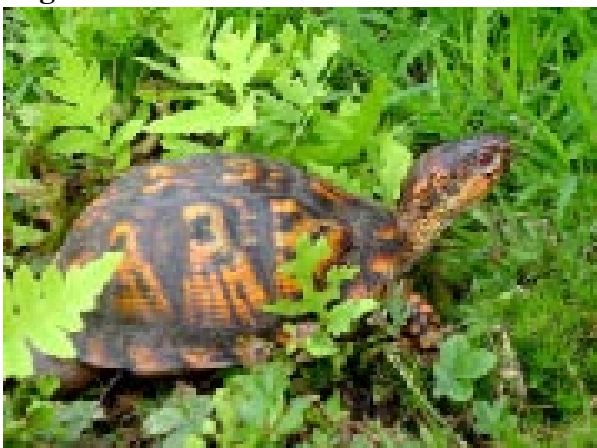
4.5.3 Endangered Species and Vernal Pools

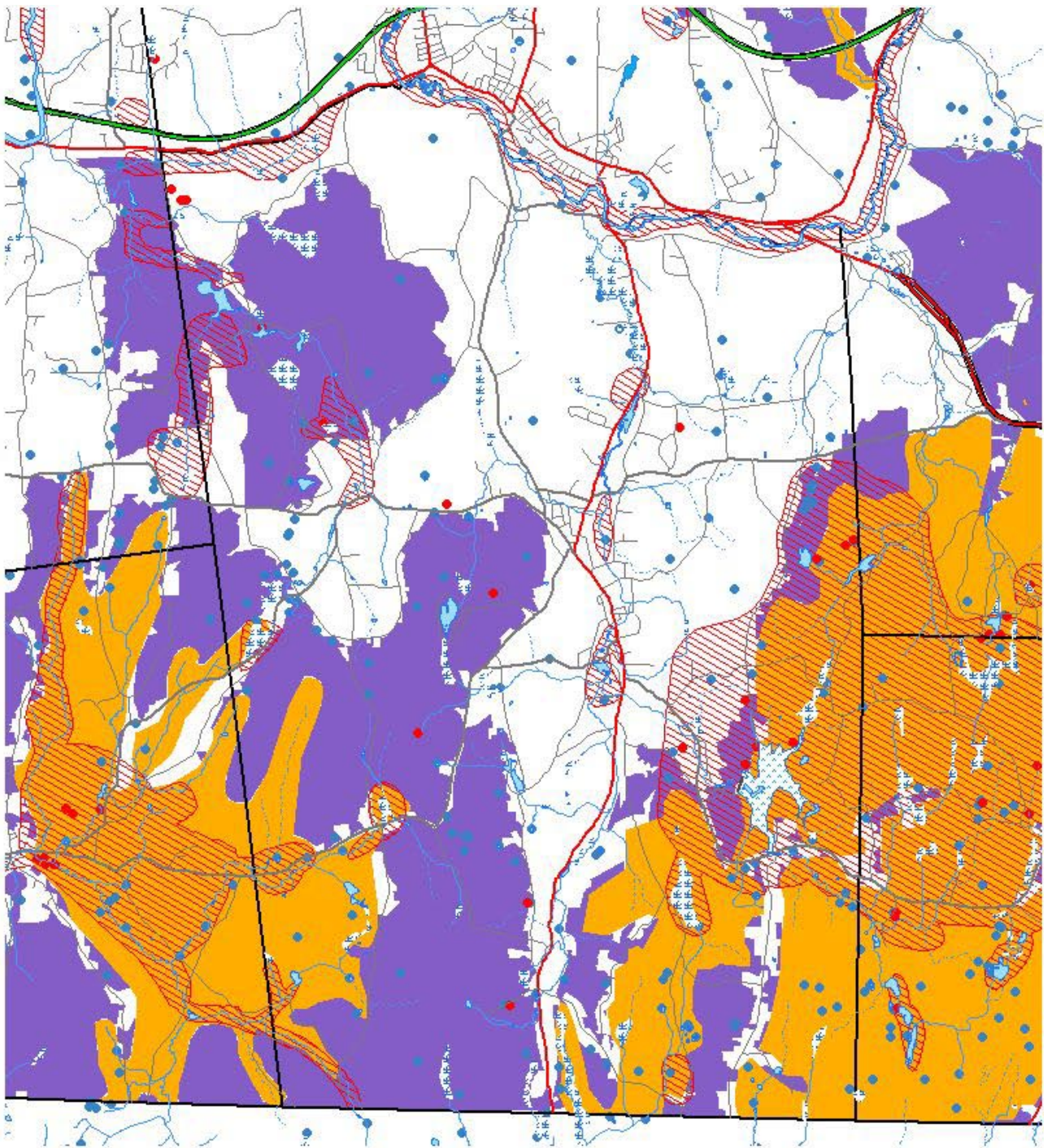
Monson is dotted with over 100 potential vernal pool sites. Vernal pools are unique wildlife habitats best known for the amphibians and invertebrate animals that use them to breed. Vernal pools, also known as ephemeral pools, autumnal pools, and temporary woodland ponds, typically fill with water in the autumn or winter due to rising ground water and rainfall and remain ponded through the spring and into summer. Vernal pools dry completely by the middle or end of summer each year, or at least every few years. Occasional drying prevents fish from establishing permanent populations. Many amphibian and invertebrate species rely on breeding habitat that is free of fish predators. Vernal pools are critical habitat for certain species of frogs and salamanders, the amphibians that help to control the mosquito population of wetlands. A complex component of the ecosystem, the vernal pool indicates the health of the town's ecosystem as a whole. Vernal pools are also important for flood control, especially in spring and fall, and improve the quality of our water supply – filtering out pollutants before the water goes into underground aquifers that supply our drinking water. Some of the animals that use vernal pools are considered threatened or endangered by the Natural Heritage and Endangered Species Program.

There are a number of species that are of special concern to the Natural Heritage program. Animals listed as species of special concern are in danger of becoming threatened or endangered because their numbers are dropping in all populations across the state. In Monson these include three turtle species, the wood turtle, the spotted turtle and the box turtle (figure 4-9). Over 53% of reptile species in Massachusetts are considered endangered. State wide monitoring and protection of these habitats are important to the long term survival of these species.

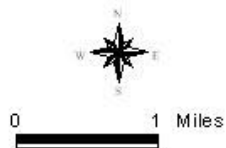
Certain areas of Monson have been designated as core habitat and supporting natural landscape for wildlife species. These areas are important to the preservation of the diversity of wildlife found within our town. These core habitats, along with vernal pools and priority habitat for endangered species are indicated on figure 4-10.

Figure 4-9 box turtle





Massachusetts Natural Heritage Program Data



- NHESP 2003 Priority Habitats for State-Protected Rare Species
- Biomap & Living Waters Core Habitat
- Biomap & Living Waters Supporting Natural Landscape
- Certified Vernal Pool
- Potential Vernal Pool

- Perennial Stream
- Intermittent Stream
- Lakes & Ponds
- Wetland

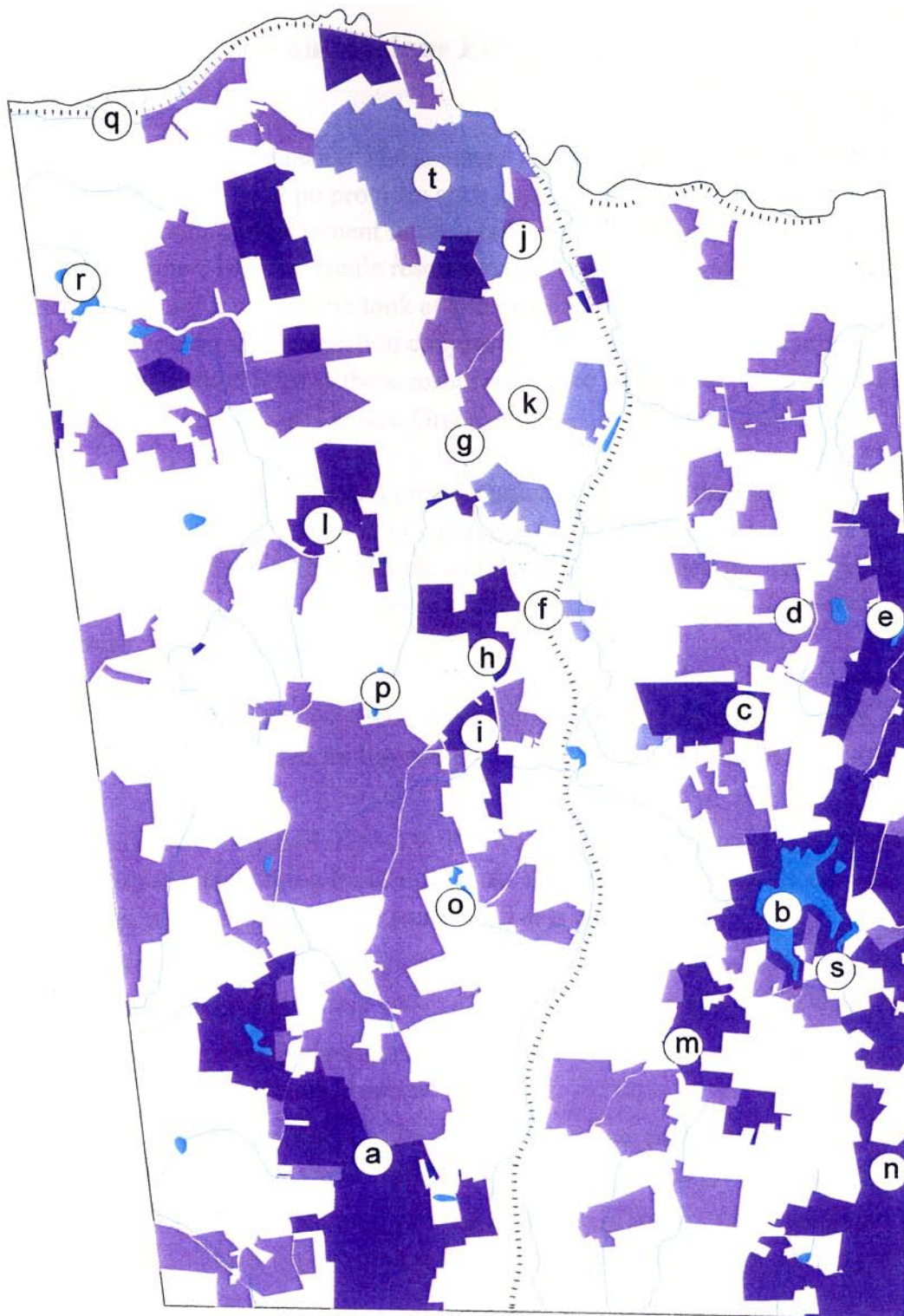
Figure 4-11

Scenic Resources and Unique Features:

Figure 4-11, Required Map #3

Key for map:

- a. Peaked Mountain Reservation, Lunden Miller Forest Tract
- b. Conant Brook Dam
- c. Koran's Farm
- d. Westview Farms
- e. Dean Pond, Brimfield State Forest
- f. Downtown and Historic Monson
- g. Flynt Quarry
- h. Keep Museum, Flynt Park
- i. Murphy Farm
- j. Chicopee Mountain
- k. Rock House
- l. Echo Hill Orchard
- m. Cedar Swamp
- n. Norcross Wildlife Sanctuary
- o. Stagecoach Lake (Caulkins Pond)
- p. Paradise Lake
- q. Quaboag River
- r. Pulpit Rock Lake
- s. Plumley Falls and Moulton Cemetery



Scenic Resources and Unique Features



- Permanently Protected Open Space
- Land in Chapter 61, 61A or 61 B
- Other Open Space (Schools, Golf Course, MDC)

Figure 4-11
Required Map 3

4.6 Scenic Resources and Unique Environments

4.6.1 Scenic Landscapes

Scenic resources can be defined as “Those visually significant or unique areas within a town ... whose protection or preservation provides such generally recognized public benefits that these areas will warrant public involvement in preservation or development decisions concerning them.” (Fabos, Green, Joyner, 1978) A scenic resource contributes to the visual interest and the variety of the landscape, making it pleasant to look at and experience visually. Scenic resources are important because they are known areas, which in conjunction with the built environment, play a strong role in defining a town aesthetically. If these resources can be preserved today, they will exist for the enjoyment of future generations (Fabos, Green, Joyner, 1978).

The many scenic resources of Monson create a unique landscape that helps to define the town. This landscape is created by a combination of natural and built factors. To determine which scenic areas and unique environments to include people of the town were polled during a public meeting and by a written survey. Many of these features are found located on Figure 4-11, Scenic Resources and Unique Features, required map #3

1. **PEAKED MOUNTAIN:** For the hiker, this mountain offers tremendous views, reaching many miles to the east, south and west, far beyond the town’s border. Peaked Mountain is the highest point in Monson.
2. **LUNDEN MILLER FOREST TRACT:** Part of the Peaked Mountain Reservation. This area offers gentler slopes and walking trails around the Lunden-Miller Pond. Some trails meander down to Temple Brook which runs along the south-west side of Monson.
3. **CONANT BROOK DAM:** Federally owned, this area is known for its beauty as well as its popularity for hiking. The dam offers views of the western ridge and of the winding Conant Brook.
4. **CEDAR SWAMP:** In the southeast area of town off Cedar Swamp Road. This is a unique wetland with hiking trails that encircle the property.
5. **FLYNT PARK:** Over 100 acres of town-owned recreation, providing hiking trails in addition to soccer and baseball fields. At its founding in the 1800’s, there was an observation tower at Flynt Park.
6. **SILVER STREET:** Old maple trees line portions of this street. There are many wetland features along this road and a Conservation property with hiking trails that allow viewing of a heron rookery and large wetland system.
7. **NORCROSS SANCTUARY:** Protected, private conservation land in the southeast corner of Monson.
8. **BRIMFELD STATE FOREST:** State-owned forest that includes Dean Pond, a public swimming area.
9. **BALD PEAK:** Located north of Hovey Road along the western ridge, the peak provides views beyond the town borders to the west.
10. **WESTVIEW FARM:** Located on East Hill Road, this farm provides homemade ice cream,

family activities as well as an extraordinary view of the entire western ridge.

11. KORANS: This farm is also located on East Hill Road, with similar views toward the western ridge. Strawberry picking is featured in spring with corn and other produce available throughout the summer.

12. ECHO HILL ORCHARD: This area provides both visually appealing orchards, and local produce. Hay rides, apple picking and local products are featured at the orchard.

13. DOWNTOWN AND HISTORIC AREAS: The downtown area provides many aesthetically pleasing buildings, several of which date back to the foundation of the town (see Cultural and Historic Areas, Section 4.6.3, below).

14. KEEP HOMESTEAD: A historic homestead featuring the collections of Myra Keep Lovell Moulton. This 75 acre property features an old quarry, vernal pools and trails for hiking. During the spring, summer and fall the Museum features programs the first Sunday of every month.

15. PLUMLEY FALLS and MOULTON HILL CEMETERY: A gorgeous granite bridge with a cascading stream at Moulton Hill Road. Across the street at the intersection of Wales Road and is a picturesque old cemetery.

16. PARADISE LAKE: A picturesque lake surrounded by a rim of houses at the base of the western ridge.

17. STAGECOACH LAKE (Also known as Caulkin pond): Similar to Paradise Lake.

18. EAST HILL ROAD: This road runs along the top of the eastern ridge of town, featuring many views of stone walls from early farmsteads, rolling pasture, cropland, and views across the valley to the western ridge.

19. HOVEY ROAD: A winding, climbing road on Bald Peak with stunning views to the valley and the Wilbraham Mountains to the west.

20. BUTLER ROAD: Enclosed by forest, this road winds down from the western ridge.

4.6.2 Unusual Geologic Features

In the fields of the eastern and western uplands, peculiar shaped rocks deposited by glaciers are found. One notable such feature is Pulpit Rock, located on private land near a glacial pond in the northwest corner of town. Pulpit Rock is so-named because one hundred years ago a popular preacher delivered sermons from the rock to his congregation on the shore. Another interesting geologic feature is Cat Rock found on the eastern ridge. The Rock House is located just north of the high school and is located on private land. This feature was a tourist attraction during the late 1800's and early 1900's.

4.6.3 Cultural and Historic Areas

The town has many distinctive historic structures, which have been identified and registered with the local Monson Historical Society. These structures, in addition to the local landscape, are a rich cultural heritage for the town. Many of the structures were built of Monson granite, quarried by Flynt at the turn of the century.

HILLSIDE CEMETERY ARCH: Located on the corner of Main and Mills Street, this large arch is hewn of Monson granite, and was a gift from Mrs. Harlan Page in remembrance of her family that rests peacefully within its gates. It was presented to the town in 1897. If a person stands within the arch, using the right vocal tone, the arch will hum.

MONSON FREE LIBRARY: Located at 2 High Street in the north end of the downtown area, the library is constructed of intricately carved Monson granite. The library was endowed by Mrs. N. M. Lyon and erected by Mrs. Carrie R. Dale in memory of their husband and father, Horatio Lyon. Dedicated in 1882, the building is of the Gothic style popular at the time.

ST. PATRICK'S CHURCH: Located on Green Street, and built in 1863 of Monson granite in the Gothic style. The walls were beautifully frescoed, the panels are filled with the Stations of the Cross and pews were originally made of ash and trimmed with black walnut. Several additions and changes were made to the church over the years.

UNIVERSALIST CHURCH: Located at 162 Main Street, the church is yet another beautiful structure carved of the local Monson granite in the Romanesque Gothic style. Built in 1888 when Dwight W. Ellis matched the money that was raised by public donation for construction of this church.

MEMORIAL HALL: Located at 198 Main Street. The project was initiated by the Soldier's Memorial Association to commemorate veterans of war. The structure, also made of Monson granite in the Gothic style, was dedicated in 1885 and served as the town hall for many years. Mr. Joseph L. Reynolds and his sons Rice M. and Theodore Reynolds donated the land and almost half the cost of the building. In 1976 the Bicentennial Commission buried a time capsule at the site.

SILVER STREET CHAPEL: Located on Silver Street. Built on land donated by the Warriner family and constructed with lumber donated by the Frietag, Reimers, Thayer and Amidon families. The church was dedicated in 1898. It is an elaborate frame building in Romanesque Revival Style. (Figure 4-12)



Figure 4-12 Silver Street Chapel

THE MONSON ACADEMY BUILDINGS: Several buildings from the original Monson Academy still remain in the downtown area, including the Holmes Gymnasium, a very fine brick and terra-cotta Queen Anne building (1900) and Cushman Hall, a three-story Georgian Revival brick building laid in Flemish bond with tar-dipped headers (1911).

MAIN STREET SCHOOL: Red brick, two stories tall with flat roof and Beaux Arts classical details (1916). This building currently houses the Town Administrative offices.

SOUTH MAIN STREET SCHOOL: This one and a half story yellow brick building near Bliss

Street is of Georgian Revival style. It was later used as a factory.

These historical structures contribute to the character of Monson and should be preserved. The Monson Historical Commission maintains a inventory of these and over 200 other structures of historical note in the Town. Though most of these historic structures contribute to the character of Monson, they are not listed on the National Historic Register.

4.7 ENVIRONMENTAL PROBLEMS

The Town of Monson is fortunate to be located in a region of outstanding beauty and modest development. An increased environmental awareness of its citizens is necessary, however, or further development may compromise environmental quality. One notable environmental challenge has been low water quality on the Quaboag River. The Chicopee River Watershed Council is currently conducting a five-year study to assess this problem.

Environmental problems are important to document since they will affect the potential development, management, or conservation of various land parcels. For example, development on steep slopes (greater than 25%) can be intrusive to more fragile environmental areas and can cause a high potential for erosion.

4.7.1 Hazardous Waste Sites

The town of Monson has 9 active sites listed on the Bureau of Waste Site Cleanup Site lists as of December 20, 2004. These sites and their locations are listed below:

Registered Sites	Address
no name	132 Bethany Road
Omega Processing	21 Bliss Street
private residence	39 Crest Road
Westview Farm	111 East Hill Road
no name	33 Green Street
private residence	31 Lakeshore Drive
Bazley Tire pile	Moulton Hill Road
former Wesson facility	293 South Main Street
Labonte's Towing	250 Wilbraham Street (route 20)

4.7.2 Landfills

On November 8, 2004 the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection issued a directive to the town of Monson relative to a piece of privately-owned property on Margaret Street that had been leased or rented for use as a municipal landfill until approximately 1980. The directive mandates that the town complete an initial site assessment, in accordance with 310 CMR 19.150, by June 1, 2005.

The Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection has ruled that Monson has no more acceptable sites for a landfill operation. Any possible sites are located in the Quaboag River Watershed and in the floodplain. The cost of the necessary liner as well as the likelihood of flooding makes these sites unfeasible for landfills.

4.7.3 Erosion

The town is bordered by an eastern and western ridge, both exceeding 25% in many areas. Currently, these slopes are covered with deciduous and evergreen vegetation. Because of low density development on the slopes, erosion is not a major concern with the exception of erosion occurring when driveways under construction are washed out after a storm. Increased development in steep areas would pose a major threat of erosion if the forests are removed.

Steeply sloped areas which are vulnerable to development may be more suitable for conservation and passive recreation, such as wildlife observation, hiking, and horseback riding. Trails must be adequately maintained so that erosion does not become a problem.

4.7.4 Chronic Flooding

The Town of Monson has taken appropriate steps to protect against flood hazard by joining the National Flood Insurance Program, and by the building of the Army Corps of Engineers dam and reservoir at Conant Brook. The Town has also adopted very strict regulations in its Zoning Bylaws regarding new development within any floodplains. Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) maps for the town are incomplete in that not all areas of the town have been mapped yet by FEMA.

4.7.5 Sedimentation

Sedimentation occurs in all of Monson's surface water bodies. During heavy periods of rain and melting, streams wash sediment into wetlands, ponds, and lakes. Over time these water bodies will become shallower.

Notable sedimentation is already apparent at Dean's Pond, located in Brimfield State Forest, making the pond less appealing for swimming for some people. Community Survey responses indicate that the Town should research the feasibility of developing additional swimming areas such as a public pool. As an alternative, sedimentation at Dean's Pond should be removed periodically.

4.7.6 Development Impact

The current development trend for Monson is single family detached housing, built in a linear fashion, along road frontages. This trend leads to increasing roads and road maintenance, in addition to changing the character of Monson visually. The impact of building more homes in the upland and steep areas will cause an increase in run-off and erosion, due to increased impervious surfaces, vegetation removal and infringement on fragile plant communities which have helped to keep soils stable in these areas prior to development. In the upland areas, since sewer service is impossible, increased development may potentially threaten groundwater quality since more septic systems will be built at a greater density. Drinking water in many of the upland areas comes from private wells.

4.7.7 Ground and Surface Water Pollution

The quality of the Quaboag River has improved since the 1960's and 1970's largely because of the abandonment of the industries and factories along the river and construction and improvement of municipal wastewater treatment facilities. The February 1999 Department of Environmental Protection, Division of Watershed Management final report under section 303(d) of the Federal Clean Water Act identifies no pollutants or stressors in Quaboag River to the Palmer Road (Route 32) bridge. The report identifies pollutants and stressors from that point to the confluence with the Ware River as pathogens.

Surface and groundwater pollution occurs due to runoff from road salt, agricultural fertilizers, and some industries along the Chicopee Brook.

Monson zoning bylaws currently incorporate a water supply protection district, which prohibits and restricts potentially polluting land uses. Maintaining groundwater quality is an important issue in Monson due to underlying aquifers in the central valley and to the presence of many private wells in the uplands where sewer service is not possible.

SECTION 5



Inventory Of Lands Of Conservation And Recreation Interest

Inventory Of Lands Of Conservation And Recreation Interest

The term open space covers a wide range of land types and land uses. For the purpose of this document, open space is any parcel or area of land or water that is improved or unimproved, and devoted to an open space use. Open spaces can be used for the purpose of preserving natural resources, managing production of resources, outdoor recreation, or public health and safety. Open spaces include functional open space, agriculture, floodways and floodplains. Open space may be publicly or privately owned and maintained.

This section of the Open Space and Recreation Plan consists of an inventory of all conservation and recreation lands in Monson, both publicly and privately owned. Permanently protected parcels are generally considered to be those owned by the town's Conservation Commission or Water Department, a federal conservation agency, or a non-profit land trust. Private land may be considered protected if the land is covered by a land preservation agreement (conservation easement) or a deed restriction in perpetuity or if a Massachusetts Agricultural Preservation Restriction (APR) has been placed on it.

It is important to protect and preserve open space as its existence provides many benefits. Natural areas are Monson's greatest resource. The scenic vistas, walking trails, and bucolic roadsides embody what is the rural character of Monson. In addition, open spaces serve practical purposes. They provide healthy habitat for wildlife and help to keep air and water clean. Natural forest communities protect areas from flooding, contribute to the ground water supply, and filter out pollutants from run-off thus preserving the cleanliness of our aquifers. As a response to increased development, protection for Monson's most significant lands must be planned. Only 14% of the land in Monson is permanently protected. To guarantee perpetual protection of the most significant lands, more action will need to be taken. See Figure 5.1 Inventory of Open Space and Recreation Lands, required map #5.

5.1 Land Preservation Tools

Approximately 66% of the town's land could still be developed. If we work towards preserving important land areas now we will be able to ensure that we have protected the rural character of our town for our children and grandchildren. Some of the programs or tools that property owners can use to preserve the scenic beauty, natural resources, natural areas, the value of timber products and agricultural lands as well as protecting wildlife are listed below.

Agricultural Preservation Restriction (APR)

This state funded program permanently protects prime and important agricultural lands. It is a voluntary program for working farms and orchards. The state pays the difference between the fair market value and the agricultural value of the land. In return the landowner agrees to a permanent deed restriction that protects the land from activities that would have a negative impact on its use for agricultural purposes.

Chapter 61

Undeveloped private lands contribute significantly to the sweeping vistas, maintain the town's rural character, and protect the town's natural resource base. These parcels protect wildlife throughout the town. Some of these private lands are covered by a special tax reduction program known as "Chapter 61".

- Chapter 61 - Timber products: Lands taxed at 5% of fair market value with additional taxes imposed during years that timber is harvested
- Chapter 61A for working or family farms: Tax rate determined by the Farmland Valuation Advisory Committee
- Chapter 61B - Natural resources and recreation: Lands taxed at 25% of fair market value

There is a minimum acreage requirement for each program. Land must be registered each year at the Assessors office and owners must agree to leave the land in the program for a certain number of years. There are financial penalties for sudden withdrawal from the program, but no penalties for allowing this tax status to expire. Although the town has the first option to buy such property if it comes onto the real estate market, this can be costly and provides the town with very little response time.

Land Preservation Agreement - Also known as a conservation easement (ce, cr)

This is a powerful tool for all landowners. It allows people to permanently protect all or part of their land while retaining ownership. It is a voluntary agreement that is unique, tailored to each owner's goals and land. These agreements can be sold or donated to a qualified conservation organization including land trusts, the town conservation commission or the historic commission. Land preservation agreements can offer land owners considerable savings on their federal income and estate taxes and can reduce local real estate taxes.

Article 97

Article 97 of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts' constitution states "*The people shall have the right to clean air and water, freedom from excessive and unnecessary noise and the natural, scenic, history, and esthetic qualities of their environment.*" It also protects certain lands acquired for natural resources purposes, meaning "conservation, development and utilization of the agricultural, mineral, forest, water, air and other natural resources." Land acquired for these purposes cannot be converted to any other use without rigorous legal action at both the local and state levels. Monson currently has three parcels of land that fall under Article 97. Monson Developmental Center has also applied for acceptance into Article 97. This action will protect a significant portion of the state hospital's 330 acres of undeveloped land.

Forest Legacy Program

This is a federally funded program that preserves forested properties by purchasing a land preservation agreement (or conservation easement) on these lands. This program encourages the owners of important forest lands to continue producing wood products rather than converting it to non-forest uses. Monson is within the Quinebaug Forest Legacy Region.

The Recreation Matrix found in the appendix lists private recreation lands, land found in the Chapter 61 programs, APR land, public recreation sites other town owned parcels of land.

5.2 Private Recreational Sites

A narrative description of the major private recreation areas in Monson is provided below:

Paradise Lake

These facilities are for lakeside residents and are closed to public use. Paradise Lake located off Paradise Lake Road is a seventeen acre lake with an average depth of 15 feet. The lake area offers swimming, fishing and small boating and ice-skating. The woodlands are suitable for hunting and woodland management and hiking.

Partridge Hollow Campground

An eighty acre campground located on Sutcliff Road in the southeast corner of Monson. This privately owned campground features camping, hiking, swimming and field sports.

Pulpit Rock Lake

Privately owned Pulpit Rock Lake is 29 acres in size and has a large section of its shores in permanent camps located near the junction of Dickerson Road and Maxwell road. The historic “Pulpit Rock” has an opening which was once used in early 1900’s by a local preacher as his pulpit. The congregation sat in the open field to hear him preach.

Quaboag Country Club

Located on Palmer Road, this semi-private course provides golfing to the general public and provides open space in the north central section of town.

Quaboag Riders Club

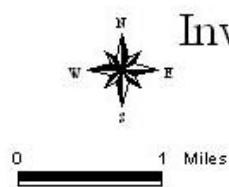
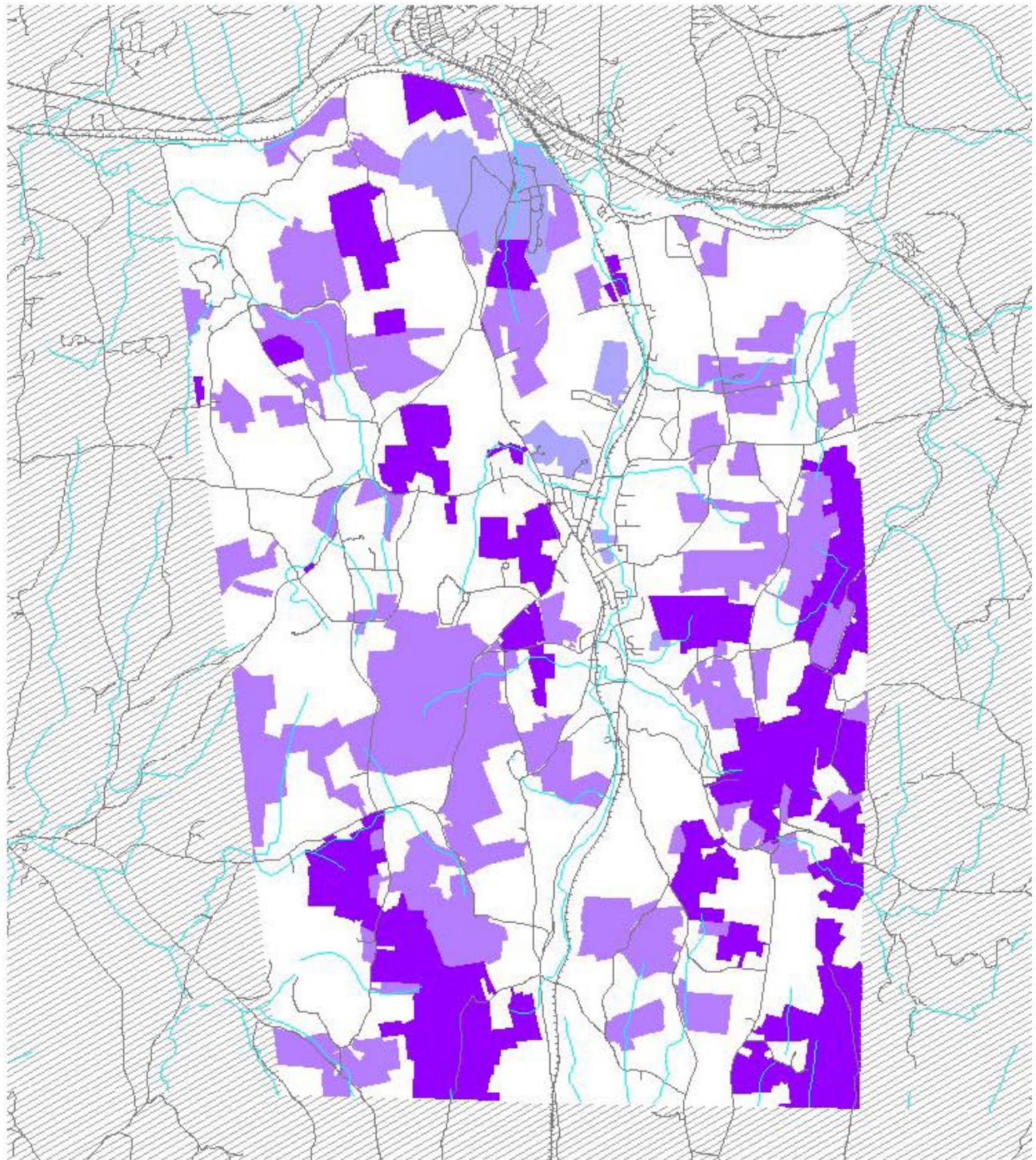
Used by ATV owners for hill climbs and trail riding. The club sponsors annual events open to the public. A spectacular view of the western range is visible from Cat Rock which is located on this club’s property.

Springfield Sportsman Club

Springfield Sportsman Club comprises approximately 120 acres of land located off Wood Hill Road. The Club offers an overall recreation area to its members including trap shooting, rifle range, target practice, archery, and picnicking. The woodlands are suitable for hunting and woodland management and the woods roads are suitable for hiking and snowmobiling. The steep slopes are used for sledding and beginner skiing. The Sportsman club provides open space in the southwest area of town. Riding south along Wood Hill Road offers an excellent view of mountains and open land.

Sunset View Farm Campground

A two hundred acre campground located on Town Farm Road, the privately owned campground currently provides camping, hiking, swimming, and field sports.



Inventory of Open Space and Recreation Lands

- Permanently Protected Open Space
- Land in Chapter 61, 61A or 61 B
- Other Open Space (Schools, Golf Course, MDC)

Figure 5-1
Required Map 4

5.3 Lands under Agricultural Preservation Restriction (APR)



There are 4 farm properties that have qualified for permanent protection under the Agricultural Preservation Restriction within Monson. They include:

- Koran's Farm (218 acres)
- Echo Hill Orchards (60 acres)
- Murphy's Farm
- Keep Homestead

5.4 Lands in the Chapter 61 Program

Chapter 61: Forest and Timber lands

In 2005 a total of 64 privately owned parcels are registered with the Chapter 61 program for forested products. Parcels greater than 50 acres include:

- Bennett Road (50 acres)
- Bennett Road (57 acres)
- Butler Road (82 acres)
- Carpenter Road (68 acres)
- Hancock Road (58 acres)
- Lower Hampden Road (87 acres)
- Maxwell Road (54 acres)
- Reimers/Stebbins Road (230 acres)
- Silver/Reimers Road (153 acres)
- Stafford Road (59 acres)
- Thayer Road (108 acres)
- Town Farm Road (50 acres)
- Town Farm Road (95 acres)
- Waid Road (72 acres)
- Wood Hill Road (255 acres)

Chapter 61A: Agricultural or Horticultural Lands

In 2005 there are a total of 43 (32 owners) parcels in Monson registered with the Chapter 61A program. Based on size (over 50 acres) there are 19 Chapter 61A properties:

- Westview Farms (379 acres)
- Beebe Road (192 acres)
- Bogan Road (151 acres)
- Brimfield Road (64 acres)
- Bumpstead Road (120 acres)
- Cedar Swamp Road (124 acres)
- East Hill Road (Koran's Farm - 218 acres)

- East Hill (Westview Farms – 379 acres)
- Lower Hampden Road (59 acres)
- Lower Hampden Road (160 acres)
- Lower Hampden Road (130 acres)
- Lower Hampden Road (74 acres)
- Macomber Road (90 acres)
- May Hill Road (194 acres)
- Munn Road (58 acres)
- Peck Brothers Road (155 acres)
- Town Farm Road (67 acres)
- Stafford Hollow Road (70 acres)
- Upper Palmer Road (107 acres)
- Wilbraham Road (Echo Hill – 61 acres)

Chapter 61B: Natural Resources and Recreation lands

There are 31 parcels registered in the Chapter 61B Program. Some of these recreation lands are open to the public for recreation and enjoyment. Notable properties include the Springfield Sportsman's Club, Partridge Hollow Campground and Sunset View Farm Campground (also has land under Ch. 61 and 61A). Properties over 50 acres listed in Ch. 61B include:

- Butler Road (91 acres)
- Lower Hampden Road (170 acres)
- Reimers Road (165 acres)
- Reimers Road (93 acres)
- Silver Street (66 acres)
- Sutcliffe Road (Partridge Hollow Campground – 85 acres)
- Town Farm Road (Sunset View Campground – 35 acres)
- Wood Hill Road (Springfield Sportsman's Club – 92 acres)

5.5 Public and Non-Profit Recreational Sites

Brimfield State Forest / Dean Pond

Brimfield State Forest / Dean Pond which is located partly in Monson and partly in Brimfield and Wales, offer picnicking, swimming, fishing, hunting, hiking, biking and horseback riding to the general public. The woodlands are managed by the State for hunting and woodland management. Restrooms are available during the season.

Conant Brook Dam

Conant Brook Dam is a 300 acres, government owned, flood control facility. A small parking area and trailhead bulletin board are found by the dam. The geologic formation of the area is a rare kettle pond. The flood plain is now dry with only a small shallow silt pool. The area is suitable for hiking, horseback riding, and potentially mountain biking. Enjoy each season with wildflowers and mountain laurel in spring along the ridges, winding through birch trees along the trail, or taking in the beautiful colors of fall.

Cedar Swamp

Cedar Swamp is a 73 acre white cedar swamp located off Cedar Swamp Road. This Swamp also contains Maple, Birch, Azaleas, Mountain Laurel, a variety of ferns, Fringed Gentian, and Skunk Cabbage. The western section of this swamp is suitable for a wildlife habitat preservation and management area for deer and hare. The whole area is suitable for a nature study area for schools and the general public. There is a marked trail that circles the swamp which is suitable for hiking and provides access to the woods for hunting.



Cushman Field

Under the jurisdiction of the Monson Parks and Recreation Commission, Cushman Field is used for a variety of recreation programs (8 acres). These include baseball, softball and soccer playing fields. Originally under the control of the private Monson Academy, the Town acquired ownership and now maintains this area for these programs. Chicopee Brook delineates the easterly side of the property and Washington Street is on the west.

Granite Valley Middle School

The Middle School offers a brand new track and field facility with a ¼ mile outdoor track. There is also a soccer field located at this school. Basketball courts are located within the school.



Flynt Park

Flynt Park covers 148 acres near the center of Monson, with opportunities for hiking, snowmobiling and viewing the valley and the town center. There are trails that wind through the historic parts of the park where there was once a tower for viewing and a zoo. The woodland in this area is suitable for hunting and timber management. There are also vernal pools. At present there are two soccer fields on the site (also referred to as Dr. Rogers Fields) and a baseball diamond with portable bleachers for viewing games.

Keep Homestead Museum

Myra Keep Lovell Moulton who died in 1988 willed the buildings and the land to the Town of Monson. About one half of the 75 acres of land is open meadow and wetlands and one half is woodland. There are three trails with a combined length of less than two miles, open year round to hiking and in winter, cross-country skiing and



snowshoeing (with maps available in the parking lot). There is a good variety of mixed hardwood and coniferous trees and other woodland plants. Around the pond and meadows, plants bloom at various times of the year. There were several granite quarries on the original Keep property and there is one small one left on the present acreage (it contains a vernal pool). The house contains the collections, the belongings and papers of the Keep family, who lived in the house for nearly 150 years. The prize collection is Myra's large button collection - one of the largest in the US. See www.keephomesteadmuseum.org for further information.



Monson Brimfield Wales (MBW) Trail

The MBW Trail was established in 1998 and is 14.5 miles long. There are two spurs, the first being the Brimfield State Forest Spur which is 2.6 miles long, and the Norcross Wildlife Sanctuary Spur which is $\frac{3}{4}$ mile each way. Beginning at the Conant Brook Dam Parking Area and traveling in a clockwise direction, the trail passes the following points of interest: Koran's Farm, Westview Farms and Creamery, #69 East Hill Road (regional historical significance, closed to the public), Brimfield Road Cemetery, Brimfield State Forest, Dean Pond swimming and Recreation Area, Norcross Wildlife Sanctuary and Plumley Falls.

Monson High School

There are both Soccer and Baseball fields located at this school. Basketball courts are located within the school.

Norcross Wildlife Sanctuary

The Norcross Wildlife Sanctuary is located on Wales-Monson Road just outside of Monson. The total Sanctuary comprises approximately eight thousand acres of wooded hills, lakes and streams, but only a small portion of the Sanctuary is located in Monson. Norcross offers two miles of marked footpaths through a variety of habitats, picnic areas, two natural history museums, and a place where one may enjoy a relaxed study of nature in quiet settings.

Peaked Mountain / Lunden-Miller Pond

Managed by the Trustees of Reservations this 500 acre natural area is open to the public for hiking, horseback riding and nature study. The main parking lot provides access to the western slope of Peaked Mountain, the highest peak in Monson, with incredible views to the south and west. The Lunden Miller Forest Tract is located on the west side of Butler Road and contains a pond and many additional hiking trails.



Quarry Hill School

Quarry Hill School offers fields in back of the school for soccer, baseball and softball. Also sitting on this 20 acre plot of land are three playgrounds, and a basketball court area. Basketball courts are located within the school, as well. On the edge of the two fields in the back is a spectacular view of

the valley in Monson. Numerous trails connect Quarry Hill with Granite Valley Middle School and the High School.

Silver Street Conservation Area

This 40 acre parcel has newly marked trails that offer residents an opportunity to walk through the woods. Lady slippers, partridge berry, and large mats of wintergreen cover the forest floor. There is a pond where abundant wildlife species such as beaver, a variety of ducks, tadpoles, frogs and salamanders can be discovered in their natural setting. Great Blue Heron often use beaver impoundments for nesting. The dead trees left standing where the water has risen provide sites for Heron to build their messy, stick nests.



Veterans Field, Skate Park and Tennis Courts

Veterans Field on Main and State Streets has three diamonds for softball and baseball. This eight acre site also offers two smaller soccer fields, a playground, basketball court and skatepark. Directly across State Street is a fenced in tennis area with two tennis courts. Rest rooms are available in the municipal office building.

5.6 ADA Accessibility Self Evaluation Report

Part I –Administrative Requirements ADA Coordinator Designation



BOARD OF SELECTMEN

110 Main Street
Monson, Massachusetts 01057

Telephone: 413-267-4100
Fax: 413-267-3726
Website: www.monson-ma.gov

February 6, 2006

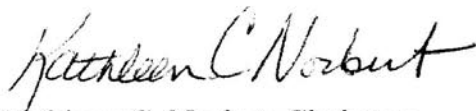
Executive Office of Environmental Affairs
100 Cambridge Street, Suite 900
Boston, MA 02114-2524

**Re: Town of Monson – Americans with Disabilities Act Coordinator
Town of Monson – Open Space and Recreation Plan**

To Whom It May Concern:

Please be advised that the Monson Board of Selectmen voted to appoint Gretchen E. Neggers, Town Administrator, as the town's ADA Coordinator. This appointment is renewed annually and Ms. Neggers has served in this capacity since 1994.

Sincerely,



Kathleen C. Norbut, Chairman
Board of Selectmen



BOARD OF SELECTMEN

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Monson, Massachusetts 01057

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Town of Monson

EQUAL ACCESS TO FACILITIES AND ACTIVITIES

Public Grievance Policy

The Town of Monson ensures that maximum opportunity will be made available to receive citizen comments, complaints, and/or to resolve grievances or inquiries regarding equal access to facilities and activities. The public shall utilize the format described here to set forth any complaint, grievance, request for program policy interpretation or clarification or any other inquiries in these matters.

Step 1:

The Town Administrator will be available to meet with citizens and employees during business hours.

When a complaint, grievance, request for program policy interpretation or clarification is received either in writing or through a meeting or telephone call, every effort will be made to create a record regarding the name, address, and telephone number of the person making the complaint, grievance, program policy interpretation or clarification. If the person desires to remain anonymous, he or she may.

A complaint, grievance, request for program policy interpretation or clarification will be responded to within ten working days (if the person making the complaint is identified) in a format that is sensitive to the needs of the recipient (i.e. verbally, enlarged type face, etc.).

Copies of the complaint, grievance, request for program policy interpretation or clarification and response will be forwarded to the appropriate town agency (i.e. park commission, conservation commission). If the grievance is not resolved satisfactorily at this level it will be progressed to the next level.

Step 2:

A written grievance will be submitted to the Town Administrator. Assistance in writing the grievance will be made available to all individuals who request it. All written grievances will be responded to within ten working days by the Town Administrator in a format that is sensitive to the needs of the recipient (i.e. verbally, enlarged type face, etc.). If the grievance is not resolved at this level it will be progressed to the next level.

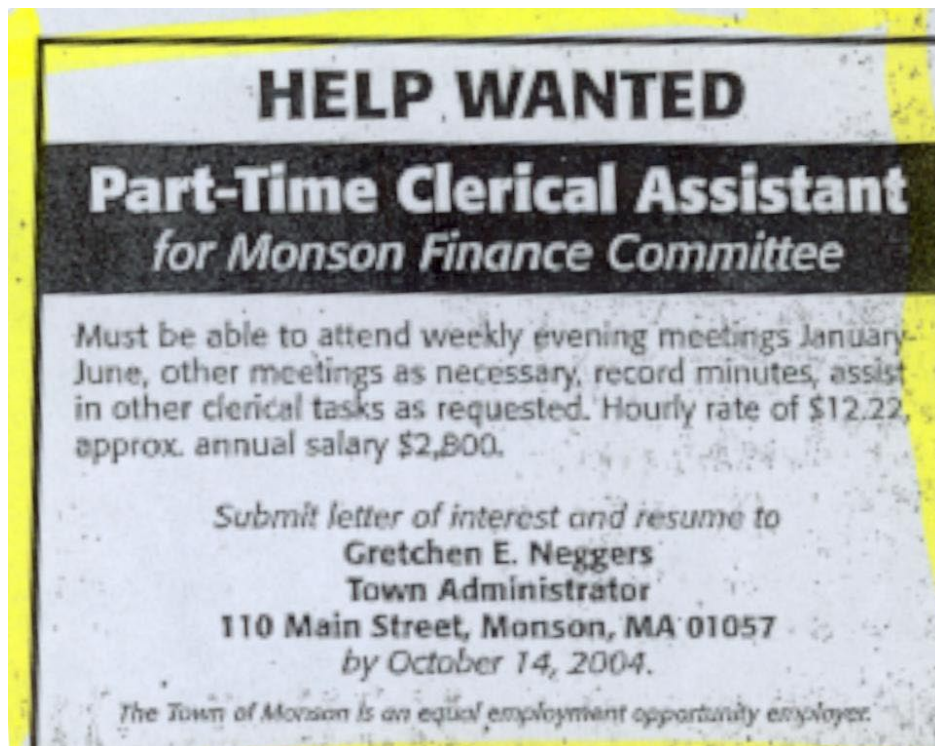
Step 3:

Public Notification

If the grievance is not satisfactorily resolved, citizens will be informed of the opportunity to meet and speak with the Board of Selectmen, with whom local authority for final grievance resolution lies. If specific jurisdiction for resolution of the complaint is held by a separate elected entity, the Board of Selectmen shall schedule a joint meeting with that separate elected entity in order to facilitate final grievance resolution. Employees and the public are notified that the community does not discriminate on the

Public Notification

basis of disability. Notification is made in a variety of formats in an attempt to make information as accessible as possible. Within the town offices notification is posted by the Town Clerk, in large print and in simple language. Auditory notification is available upon request in the Town Clerk's office.



The Town of Monson is [↑]an equal opportunity employer.

Participation of an Individual with Disabilities

Charles H. Peet, of 63 High Street, Monson MA, represented individuals with disabilities in the completion of this Accessibility Self Evaluation Report.

Name: Charles H. Peet Signature:

Charles H Peet

Part II – Program Accessibility Facility Inventories & Transition Plans

“The Monson Parks & Recreation Department is dedicated to providing and developing sound recreational opportunities, both active and passive, that meet the needs of the community keeping on perspective and taking into account our department having the proper space, resources and funding to properly and safely operate the programs. While providing these opportunities, we will stress that the participants will develop physically, psychologically and socially through participation.” – Park & Recreation Department

The Monson Parks & Recreation Department makes every effort to accommodate people with disabilities, physically and programmatically. Monson’s Public Grievance Policy is available in the event that the Park & Recreation Department does not provide equal access to public recreation facilities and/or activities.

Facility Name	Flynt Park		
Jurisdiction	Monson Parks & Recreation Department		
Location	Park Road		
Total Acreage	148		
Activity	Walking/ Hiking, Nature Observation		
Site Amenities (equipment)	Trails		
Transition Plan			
Barrier to Access	Corrective Action	Scheduled Change	Authority
No designated handicap parking close to trails	Construct public parking areas including handicap spaces	2007	Parks & Recreation Commission
Trails are inaccessible due to slope/grades and surfacing	Design and construct an accessible trail system	2009	
Note: Historically a significant recreational facility in the late eighteen hundreds, Flynt Park is now remote and undeveloped. It is anticipated that accessibility requirements will be included with overall park improvements as they move forward.			

Facility Name	Roger's Field's		
Jurisdiction	Monson Parks & Recreation Department		
Location	Park Road		
Total Acreage	10		
Activity	Athletic Field (soccer, baseball)		
Site Amenities (equipment)	Athletic equipment such as goals, bases, plates, and backstops		
	Dugouts		
	Spectator Seating		
	Unpaved Vehicular Access Road		
	Unpaved Parking		
Transition Plan			
Barrier to Access	Corrective Action	Scheduled Change	Authority
No designated handicap parking- Lower Rogers Field	Designate parking and locate and install appropriate signage.	2006	Parks & Recreation Commission
No designated handicap parking – Upper Rogers Field	Designate parking and locate and install appropriate signage.	2006	
No accessible paths of travel	Design and construct connective accessible paths throughout facility	2007	
Note: Third Rogers Field is currently being developed as a playing field. Prior to this, land was undeveloped and overgrown. Handicap accessibility requirements will be incorporated as construction continues.			

Facility Name	Veteran's Field			
Jurisdiction	Monson Parks & Recreation Department			
Location	110 Main Street			
Total Acreage	8			
Activity	Athletic Field's (soccer, baseball) (Sub Facilities – see appropriate section below)			
Site Amenities (equipment)	Athletic equipment such as goals, bases, plates, and backstops			
	Dugouts			
	Paved parking area on-site and along State Street			
Transition Plan				
Barrier to Access		Corrective Action	Scheduled Change	Authority
No vehicular access for people with disabilities to corner playing fields		Allow vehicular access over fields for people with disabilities	2006	Parks & Recreation Commission
No designated parking for people with disabilities on State Street		Locate and install appropriate signage	2007	
No access for people with disabilities from State Street to the fields		Construct a compliant ramp from State Street to the field	2007	
No accessible paths of travel		Design and construct connective, accessible, path(s) of travel as appropriate	2008	

Facility Name	Sub Facility - Veteran’s Field Skate Park		
Jurisdiction	Monson Parks & Recreation Department		
Location	110 Main Street		
Total Acreage	.25		
Activity	Skateboard, Roller Blade, Bicycle & Basketball		
Site Amenities (equipment)	Ramps etc. for technical skateboard, roller blade, or bicycle use		
	One basketball court with viewing benches		
	Paved, accessible, parking lot		
Transition Plan			
Barrier to Access	Corrective Action	Scheduled Change	Authority
Access to skate ramp use for people with disabilities	Build or acquire inclusive equipment	2010	Parks & Recreation Commission
Note: Access to the park is available as is parking for people with disabilities. The equipment of the facility is not suitable for people with certain disabilities.			

Facility Name	Sub Facility - Veteran’s Field Play Ground		
Jurisdiction	Monson Parks & Recreation Department		
Location	110 Main Street		
Total Acreage	.25		
Activity	Play/Picnic Area		
Site Amenities (equipment)	Accessible playground equipment including swings, platforms, etc.		
	Tables and Benches		
Transition Plan			
Barrier to Access	Corrective Action	Scheduled Change	Authority
No accessible paths of travel	Include connection to accessible paths of travel as outlined above in “Veteran’s Field & Sub Facilities”	2008	Parks & Recreation Commission

Facility Name	Tennis Courts		
Jurisdiction	Monson Parks & Recreation Department		
Location	State Street		
Total Acreage	.5		
Activity	Tennis and horse shoes		
Site Amenities (equipment)	Two tennis courts		
	Four horse shoe pits		
	Paved parking area		
Transition Plan			
Barrier to Access	Corrective Action	Scheduled Change	Authority
Gate not easily opened	Change hardware to accessible hardware	2006	Parks & Recreation Commission
No accessible paths of travel	Design and construct connective accessible path between the parking area, tennis courts, and horseshoe pits	2007	
No designated parking for people with disabilities	Locate and install appropriate signage	2006	

Facility Name	Bunyan Road			
Jurisdiction	Monson Conservation Commission			
Location	Bunyan Road			
Total Acreage	10			
Activity	None, public use not applicable			
Site Amenities (equipment)	None			
Transition Plan				
Barrier to Access		Corrective Action	Scheduled Change	Authority
NA				Monson Cons. Com.
Facility Name	Cedar Swamp			
Jurisdiction	Monson Conservation Commission			
Location	Cedar Swamp Road			
Total Acreage	75.4			
Activity	Hiking			
Site Amenities (equipment)	Hiking trails and informational kiosk			
Transition Plan				
Barrier to Access		Corrective Action	Scheduled Change	Authority
Grade and nature of the terrain on hiking trails.		Accessible trail to be provided at another facility.		Monson Cons. Com.

Facility Name	Dorset Road		
Jurisdiction	Monson Conservation Commission		
Location	Dorset Road		
Total Acreage	13.5		
Activity	None, public use not applicable		
Site Amenities (equipment)	None		
Transition Plan			
Barrier to Access	Corrective Action	Scheduled Change	Authority
NA			Monson Cons. Com.

Facility Name	East Hill Road			
Jurisdiction	Monson Conservation Commission			
Location	East Hill Road			
Total Acreage	28.7			
Activity	None, public use not applicable			
Site Amenities	None			
Transition Plan				
Barrier to Access		Corrective Action	Scheduled Change	Authority
NA				Monson Cons. Com.

Facility Name	Fern Hill Road		
Jurisdiction	Monson Conservation Commission		
Location	Fern Hill Road		
Total Acreage	96.7		
Activity	None, public use not applicable		
Site Amenities (equipment)	None		
Transition Plan			
Barrier to Access	Corrective Action	Scheduled Change	Authority
NA			Monson Cons. Com.

Facility Name	Kolowrat Farm Conservation Area		
Jurisdiction	Monson Conservation Commission		
Location	Margaret Street		
Total Acreage	15.8		
Activity	Walking and Nature Observation		
Site Amenities (equipment)	Trails		
	Footbridge		
	Boardwalks		
	Rustic Benches		
	Informational Kiosk		
	Paved Parking Area		
Transition Plan			
Barrier to Access	Corrective Action	Scheduled Change	Authority
Grade and nature of the terrain	Surface and widen the trail In locations appropriate for providing access for people with disabilities.	2010	Monson Conservation Commission
Boardwalks are narrow.	Widen boardwalks as appropriate for providing access for people with disabilities	2010	

Facility Name	Peaked Mountain		
Jurisdiction	Monson Conservation Commission, Trustees of Reservations & Town of Monson		
Location	Butler Road		
Total Acreage			
Activity	Hiking		
Site Amenities (equipment)	Hiking trails, informational kiosks, un-paved parking areas, unpaved access road		
Transition Plan			
Barrier to Access	Corrective Action	Scheduled Change	Authority
Grade and nature of the terrain on hiking trails.	Vehicular access provided to representative natural areas	2006	Monson Conservation Commission

Facility Name	Silver Street Conservation Area		
Jurisdiction	Monson Conservation Commission		
Location	Silver Street		
Total Acreage	38.7		
Activity	Walking		
Site Amenities (equipment)	Trails		
	Informational Kiosk		
	Unpaved parking area		
Transition Plan			
Barrier to Access	Corrective Action	Scheduled Change	Authority
Grade and nature of the terrain	Accessible trails to be provided at another location.		Monson Conservation Commission

Facility Name	Stanton Road		
Jurisdiction	Monson Conservation Commission		
Location	Stanton Road		
Total Acreage	34		
Activity	None, public use not applicable		
Site Amenities (equipment)	None		
Transition Plan			
Barrier to Access	Corrective Action	Scheduled Change	Authority
NA			Monson Cons. Com.

Facility Name	Upper Palmer Road		
Jurisdiction	Monson Conservation Commission		
Location	Upper Palmer Road		
Total Acreage	0.4		
Activity	None, public use not applicable		
Site Amenities (equipment)	None		
Transition Plan			
Barrier to Access	Corrective Action	Scheduled Change	Authority
NA			Monson Cons. Com.

Facility Name	Upper Palmer Road (Teatrault-Brown)		
Jurisdiction	Monson Conservation Commission		
Location	Upper Palmer Road		
Total Acreage	83.2		
Activity	None, public use not applicable		
Site Amenities (equipment)	None		
Transition Plan			
Barrier to Access	Corrective Action	Scheduled Change	Authority
NA			Monson Cons. Com.

Facility Name	Warriner Road		
Jurisdiction	Monson Conservation Commission		
Location	Warriner Road		
Total Acreage	30.6		
Activity	None, public use not applicable		
Site Amenities (equipment)	None		
Transition Plan			
Barrier to Access	Corrective Action	Scheduled Change	Authority
NA			Monson Cons. Com.

Facility Name	Wilbraham Road (Gerrish North & South)		
Jurisdiction	Monson Conservation Commission		
Location	Wilbraham Road		
Total Acreage	32.6		
Activity	None, public use not applicable		
Site Amenities (equipment)	None		
Transition Plan			
Barrier to Access	Corrective Action	Scheduled Change	Authority
NA			Monson Cons. Com.

Part III –Employment Practices

ADA Compliance Testament



BOARD OF SELECTMEN

110 Main Street
Monson, Massachusetts 01057

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February 6, 2006

Executive Office of Environmental Affairs
100 Cambridge Street, Suite 900
Boston, MA 02114-2524

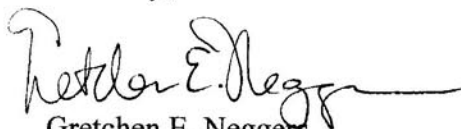
Re: Town of Monson – Open Space and Recreation Plan

To Whom It May Concern:

This letter is to confirm that the Town of Monson's hiring and employment practices are consistent with standards and requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act. These include recruitment, personnel actions, leave administration, training, tests, medical exams/questionnaires, social and recreational programs, collective bargaining agreements and wage and salary administration.

If I can provide any additional information, please contact me.

Sincerely,


Gretchen E. Neggers
Town Administrator
ADA Coordinator

SECTION 6



Community Vision

Community Vision

6.1 Description of the Process

The community's vision for Monson has been determined through several avenues of input. First, members of the Open Space and Recreation Planning Committee represent an array of interest and expertise evidenced by their participation in many of the major town boards including Parks and Recreation, Planning Board, Conservation Commission, and the Tourism Committee. Second, the Committee reviewed the results of the recently completed Master Plan for which several public meetings were held in 2002. Third, public input was encouraged and facilitated through a survey and a public meeting.

In the winter of 2004/2005 the Open Space and Recreation Plan Committee modified the survey that was used when creating Monson's 1999 Open Space plan to reflect some of the changes that have occurred during the last five years. Questions related to the kind of lands people would like to protect, what kind of recreation opportunities people would like to have, which of the existing open space and recreation opportunities people take advantage of and what measures people are willing to take to protect land or increase recreation opportunities. The surveys were distributed to several public places including the Town Administration building and the Monson Free Library from late March through mid-April. This time period included the April 4th town elections where numerous surveys were collected. An Open Space display was set up to attract attention to the surveys at the library.

On March 23, 2005 a public meeting was held at the Monson High School. Twenty five people attended the meeting. A short presentation was provided to explain what an Open Space Plan was, why it was important to plan for the future of our town, and some of the tools for land protection that might be employed including regulation, and private land protection strategies and their advantages. After the presentation people broke up into smaller groups to fill out the survey and participate in pointed discussion relating to open space and recreation. People were asked to mark a map to show which section of town they reside, then note sections of town where they would like to see greater land protection or recreational opportunities such as swimming or biking. Through the process, a total of 55 surveys were collected.

6.2 Statement of Open Space and Recreation Goals

The Town of Monson possesses a rich rural heritage of field and forest, stream and wetland, ridgeline and valley vistas. Five broad goals have been identified through a public meeting and discussion forum, interviews with key informants, discussions with the Open Space and Recreation Planning Committee, and a community survey which reflect the appreciation that the local townspeople share for the rural and historic character of their town:

1. Protect sensitive natural resources from adverse and inappropriate development.
2. Avoid development in areas of potential hazard and target appropriate areas to receive growth.
3. Preserve the rural and historic character of the town.
4. Preserve and support local agriculture
5. Expand and manage recreational open-space opportunities especially in the downtown area.

Thus the intent of the open space planning process should be to present an open space and recreational management plan based on a sensible sustainable resources policy.

SECTION 7



Analysis Of Needs

Analysis Of Needs

This section summarizes the findings of the previous chapters and identifies resource protection, community, and management needs in Monson.

7.1 Summary of Resource Protection Needs

Community survey responses indicate that resource protection in Monson should concentrate on three major factors:

- Continued protection and monitoring of groundwater resources.
- Guiding development away from areas which are environmentally sensitive or provide significant wildlife habitat.
- Protection of scenic and rural character, particularly views of and from mountain ridges throughout the town.

Source water protection is important in the town of Monson because the primary aquifer recharge area is found along the central valley and Route 32. This area is also prone to greater development, is a less forested area, and contains less protected open space. There is, however, a large wetland that is found just north of the center of town helps to protect our aquifer and provides a buffer around one of the town wells. The Zone 2 water resource protection plan also helps to limit the kinds of activities and industries that can occupy the lands around this important aquifer recharge area.

A secondary aquifer recharge area is located in the vicinity of Silver Street and Reimers Road. Although the water department has no current plans to use that aquifer, protection of the area would keep the water clean for any future development in the northwest corner of the town. Only about 1/3 of the town's population is able to receive town water service. This is partially due to the unique topography in Monson. Drinking water is important to all citizens, yet no method for testing or monitoring water quality exists for people with private wells.

Monson is primarily composed of forested lands. Large patches of forest promote species diversity and large, continuous patches (50-100 acres) provide interior area for deep forest-dwelling species. Healthy, sustainable forests attract a greater variety of wildlife, which in turn contribute to the overall health of the system. Healthy forests also provide a variety of recreation opportunities and important resources including clean water and air, and protection from environmental hazards including flooding.

The people of Monson feel that one of our most scenic resources is the east and west ridge lines that run through the town. These ridges can be viewed from many places along Main Street and Route 32 when driving through town. Roads that access these ridges provide beautiful views of the surrounding towns and down into the valleys in the center of Monson. In the survey people indicated numerous areas where they can see these ridges and valleys and asked that protection of these scenic and rural qualities be addressed. Monson has no zoning restrictions to prohibit development on slopes.

7.2 Summary of Community's Needs

Through a public meeting and discussion, a community survey, a diverse panel of committee members representing varied town interests, and consultation of Monson's recently written master plan, the following list of specific needs has emerged. Notably, some of the following needs closely parallel the needs indicated by the Massachusetts Outdoors 2000, Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP) for the entire state as well as our area.

- Improved trail based recreation (SCORP Parallel)
 1. Interpreted historic routes and or trails
 2. Trails linking the core downtown, recreational facilities and neighborhoods
 3. Town-wide and regional hiking/biking/walking trails
- Expanded field based recreation
 1. Provide for possibility of tournament play in Monson
 2. Additional field lighting
 3. Improved signage to locate fields
- Recreational opportunities for handicapped people
- Expanded recreational opportunities for teens & young adults
- Public access to rivers, lakes, and streams
- Retention of scenic quality through preservation of rural character
- Pamphlet mapping and describing recreational opportunities to increase awareness of public resources;
- Regulated growth limiting the location of new house construction based on scenic, recreational, or ecological impact

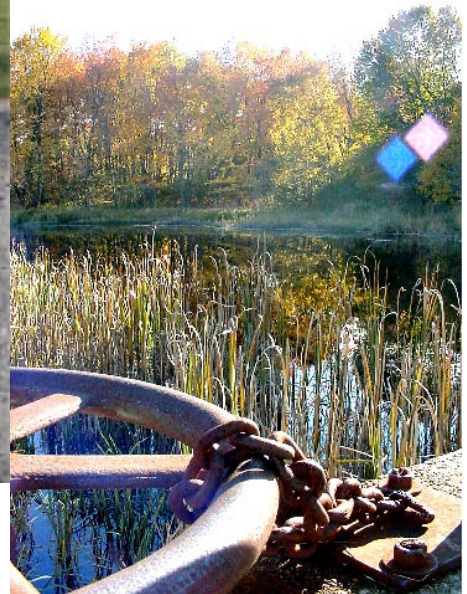
7.3 Management Needs, Potential Change of Use

In order to create a strong, network of open space and recreational areas in town, several steps must be taken to realize that goal. Some of these steps are also identified in the Master Plan.

The following management needs have been identified:

- Creation of a maintenance fund to allow for better support of existing and proposed facilities.
- Passage of regulations limiting the amount of development on steep slopes.
- Passage of a wetlands protection bylaw, limiting development adjacent to wetlands.
- Creation of a Community Preservation Act committee to pursue passage of this strong and important Act allowing the town to leverage funds to protect more open space.
- Continued coalition of existing in-town groups to link projects together and make a strong base of support to build consensus. A united townspeople will accomplish many projects!
- Need to continue to pursue grant writing to raise funds for acquisition of land protection, and to link up with outside resources for assistance and guidance, such as the locally-based Norcross Sanctuary and Opacum Land Trust, the state Trustees of Reservations, as well as national programs such as the Forest Legacy Program.

SECTION 8



Goals And Objectives

Goals And Objectives

The overlying purpose of the Open Space and Recreation Plan is to build a greenway network as a framework for addressing these goals and objectives.

This section identifies specific goals and objectives that best reflect the community's open space and recreation needs. These goals and objectives are based on the Community Open Space Survey done in 2005, the goals and objectives listed in the 1999 Open Space and Recreation Plan, and the Committee's perception of needs based on conversations among the committee members and with citizens of Monson. The open space goals presented in the Monson Master Plan were also considered.

The Committee chose to list each objective under the goal in which it was most appropriate. Some overlap between goals was unavoidable and may reflect the most critical needs of the town.

8.1 GOALS

GOAL A:

PRESERVE THE CHARACTER OF THE TOWNSCAPE. CONTINUE TO IDENTIFY AREAS OF SPECIAL INTEREST, TARGET PROTECTION AND OFFER GUIDELINES FOR MORE SENSITIVE DEVELOPMENT.

- A1. Preserve and protect critical wildlife habitat, both forest interior areas as well as open fields for all species.
- A2. Preserve and protect scenic ridgelines and valley views.
- A3. Preserve and protect the unique historic structures and landscapes of the town.
- A4. Promote the use of the Open Space Communities by-law.
- A5. Promote local farms and aid farmers by encouraging them to apply for APR designation, or agricultural tax abatement programs (61A).
- A6. Establish a local Agricultural Commission.
- A7. Encourage private landowners to protect and preserve scenic landscapes through state forest and recreation tax abatement programs (61,61B), or permanently protect their land through the use of federal monies available from the Forest Legacy Program.

GOAL B:

EXPAND AND MANAGE RECREATIONAL OPEN SPACE OPPORTUNITIES. ADDRESS THE KNOWN, EXISTING DEFICIENCIES AND PLAN FOR ANTICIPATED NEEDS.

- B1. Establish a greenway that would provide a trail network for hiking, walking and biking to link existing and future public open space.

- B2. Establish recreational opportunities for disabled adults and children.
- B3. Establish a downtown river walk
- B4. Improve public access to local waterways for non-motorized boating.
- B5. Create a public ice rink.
- B6. Create more opportunities for outdoor public swimming.
- B7. Step up recreational programming for adults such as downtown walking groups, softball leagues and fitness trails.
- B8. Connect Colonial Village to Veterans Field with a bridge to improve access for seniors.
- B9. Establish an interpretive route featuring significant historic sites within the town.

GOAL C:

PRESERVE AND PROTECT AREAS OF PUBLIC CONCERN OR SENSITIVE FEATURES WITHIN THE TOWN.

- C1. Preserve and protect watersheds and water bodies throughout the town.
- C2. Create a source water protection plan to assure the water quality of the town's drinking water supply.
- C3. Develop a water quality testing program for people served by private wells.
- C4. Preserve and protect priority habitat for endangered wildlife species.
- C5. Promote greater restrictions on development of steep driveways where erosion and runoff impacts the town roads and adjacent lands.
- C6. Refine current by-laws to afford greater protection of slopes, ridgelines and wetland areas.

GOAL D:

IMPLEMENT THE OPEN SPACE AND RECREATION PLAN.

- D1. Set up a committee to oversee the plan implementation
- D2. Organize and set up a source of funding for trail maintenance and land acquisition.
- D3. Establish a committee to promote the passage of the Community Preservation Act.
- D4. Increase awareness of existing public resources through the publication of an informational pamphlet.

SECTION 9



Five Year Action Plan

Five Year Action Plan

In order to implement the goals and objectives outlined in the previous section, the 5-year action plan establishes an organizational timeline. Please refer to the action Plan map, required map #6, in this section.

GOAL A:

PRESERVE THE CHARACTER OF THE TOWNSCAPE. CONTINUE TO IDENTIFY AREAS OF SPECIAL INTEREST, TARGET PROTECTION AND OFFER GUIDELINES FOR MORE SENSITIVE DEVELOPMENT.

RESPONSIBLE: Conservation Commission, Planning Board and Historic Society

Objectives:

- A1. Preserve and protect critical wildlife habitat, both forest interior areas as well as open fields for all species.
- A2. Preserve and protect scenic ridgelines and valley views.
- A3. Preserve and protect the unique historic structures and landscapes of the town.
- A4. Promote the use of the Open Space Communities by-law.
- A5. Promote local farms and aid farmers by encouraging them to apply for APR designation, or agricultural tax abatement programs (61A).
- A6. Establish a local Agricultural Commission.
- A7. Encourage private landowners to protect and preserve scenic landscapes through state forest and recreation tax abatement programs (61,61B), or permanently protect their land through the use of federal monies available from the Forest Legacy Program.

Year 1: 2006

The Conservation Commission begins to identify critical wildlife and endangered species habitat. This goal is also addressed and should be coordinated with efforts to promote greenways (Goal B1) and preserve and protect priority habitat (Goal C4).

The Open Space and Recreation Implementation Committee identifies scenic ridgelines and valley views to present to the Planning Board for work on by-law adjustments (Goal C5).

The Historical Society evaluates the most “at risk” structures and landscapes that are important to maintaining Monson’s historical character. This can be done through the Department of Conservation and Recreation’s (DCR) Historic Curator grant or money designated for Historic Preservation through the Community Preservation Act.

The Planning Board and Conservation Commission help to educate developers about the benefits through the use of the Open Space Communities by-law. The two groups should consider producing an informational flyer to be made available through the Building Department office. Seek grant money through private NGOs and local businesses to produce this flyer.

Year 2: 2007

Target key parcels for protection. Work with local land owners and local land trusts to raise awareness of the importance of historic and natural features worthy of protection.

Form an Agricultural Commission with representatives from the local farms to preserve and promote farm stands, local produce, and recreational opportunities that farms provide to the town.

Year 3: 2008

Contact significant land owners within the town. Make sure that people are aware of the Chapter 61 program and are taking advantage of it in appropriate cases.

Begin to raise awareness of plans to protect key parcels targeted in Year 2. Use tools such as the Agricultural Preservation Restriction, land preservation agreements or use of the Open Space Communities by-law to protect these parcels.

Work with local land trust and apply for funds available through grant programs such as the Federal Forest Legacy program and the Self-Help program of the Executive Office of Environmental Affairs to purchase land and land preservation agreements.

Historic Society proposes protection for parcels that they have identified within the town. Coordination between commissions, boards, and societies is critical to protect the best that Monson has to offer. Use the Department of Conservation Resources Historic Landscape Preservation Grants to fund some of our most important historical landscapes.

Year 4, 5: 2009, 2010

Finalize grant proposals.

Support Farms and the Agricultural Commission to aid additional use of the Agricultural Preservation Restriction.

Negotiate for and acquire land or land preservation agreements.

GOAL B:

EXPAND AND MANAGE RECREATIONAL OPEN SPACE OPPORTUNITIES. ADDRESS THE KNOWN, EXISTING DEFICIENCIES AND PLAN FOR ANTICIPATED NEEDS.

RESPONSIBLE: Parks and Recreation Board, Open Space Implementation Committee, Board of Tourism, Historical Society

Objectives:

- B1. Establish a greenway that would provide a trail network for hiking, walking and biking to link existing and future public open space.
- B2. Establish recreational opportunities for disabled adults and children.

- B3. Establish a downtown river walk
- B4. Improve public access to local waterways for non-motorized boating.
- B5. Create a public ice rink.
- B6. Create more opportunities for outdoor public swimming.
- B7. Step up recreational programming for adults such as downtown walking groups, softball leagues and fitness trails.
- B8. Connect Colonial Village to Veterans Field with a bridge to improve access for seniors.
- B9. Establish an interpretive route featuring significant historic sites within the town.

Year 1: 2006

The Open Space Implementation Committee, Parks and Recreation Department, Historical Society, and the Council on Aging collaborate to determine which existing recreational and historic resources can be linked through a greenway system.

Prioritize projects such as the river walk, a fitness trails and the bridge between Colonial Village and Veterans field. Some of these can be completed by volunteer groups such as scouts, school community service groups or interested citizens.

Propose facilities that could be improved to allow greater use by disabled adults and children.

Determine where additional recreational fields, swimming and boating opportunities and an ice rink might be most feasible.

Year 2: 2007

Educate and build support to establish a recreational greenway, add or improve athletic fields to promote tournament play in the town, increase swimming and boating opportunities and access to facilities for handicapped people.

Identify and apply for funding through NGO grants, the Community Preservation Act, Mass Turnpike, or investigate grants from the National Park Service's Urban Parks Restoration and Recovery Program for key projects.

Year 3 – 5: 2008 – 2010

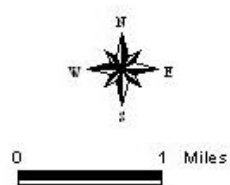
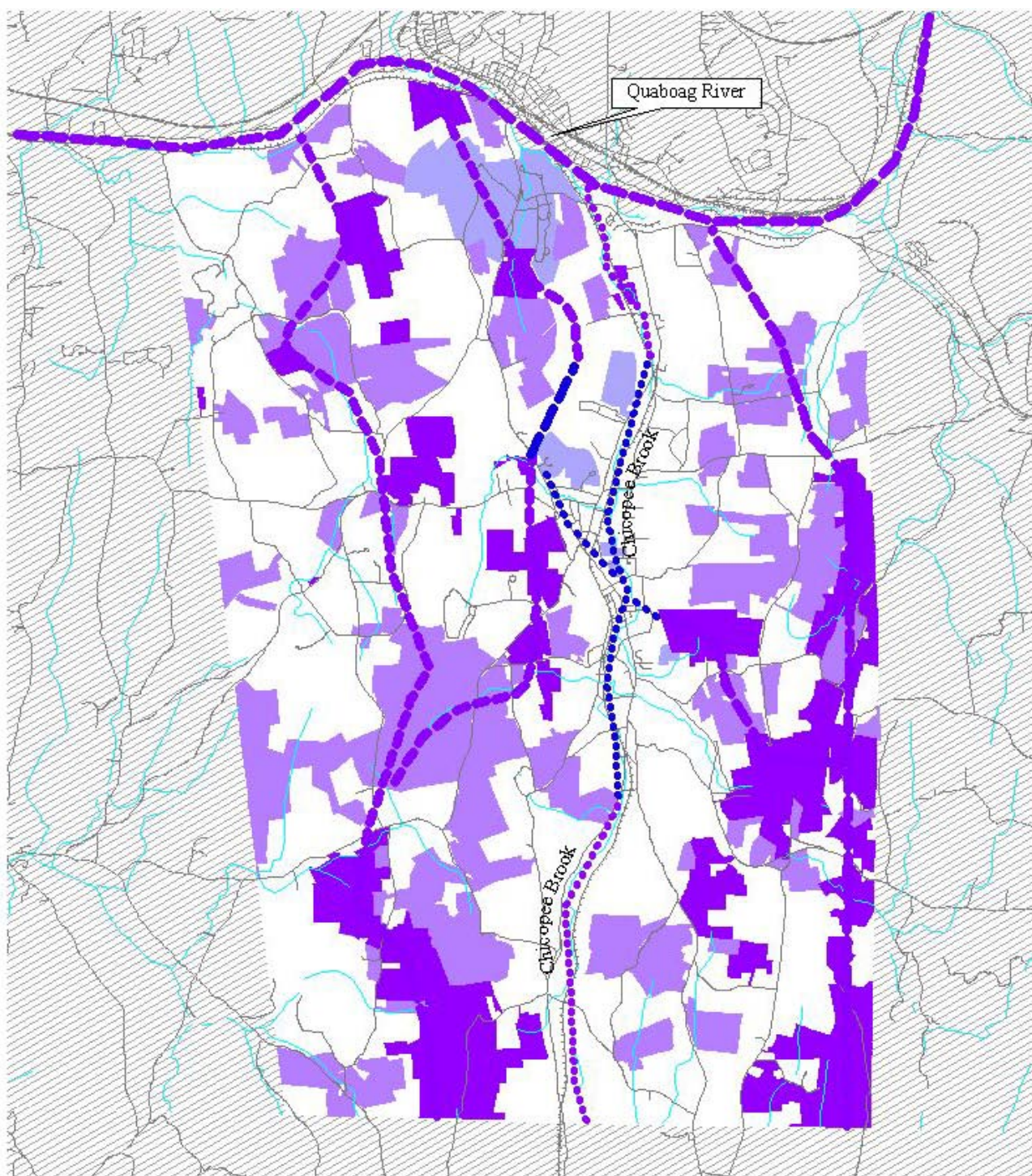
Apply for grants to improve facilities or acquire properties.

Obtain cost estimates for design, engineering and building of new facilities.

GOAL C:

PRESERVE AND PROTECT AREAS OF PUBLIC CONCERN OR SENSITIVE FEATURES WITHIN THE TOWN.

RESPONSIBLE: Water and Sewer Department, Planning Board and Conservation Commission



Potential Greenway Network

- Permanently Protected Open Space
- Land in Chapter 61, 61A or 61 B
- Other Open Space (Schools, Golf Course, MDC)
- Conservation / Recreation Corridor
- Cultural / Historical Corridor

Figure 9-1

Required Map 5

Objectives:

- C1. Preserve and protect watersheds and water bodies throughout the town.
- C2. Create a source water protection plan to assure the water quality of the town's drinking water supply.
- C3. Develop a water quality testing program for people served by private wells.
- C4. Preserve and protect priority habitat for endangered wildlife species.
- C5. Promote greater restrictions on development of steep driveways where erosion and runoff impacts the town roads and adjacent lands.
- C6. Refine current by-laws to afford greater protection of slopes, ridgelines and wetland areas.

Year 1:2006

Appoint a committee and contact the Massachusetts Rural Watershed Association to complete and implement a Source Water Protection Plan. This same committee can begin to look at land which should be protected within primary watersheds. Look into grant monies provided by the Executive Office of Environmental Affairs to protect land within the watershed.

Year 2: 2007

Collect information on water quality testing programs from the state. Design and implement a testing service to determine contaminants that might be affecting private wells.

The Planning board, in accordance with the Master Plan and Open Space Plan recommendations should begin to refine the by-laws with regard to driveways on steep slopes, and development on slopes greater than 15% and ridgelines.

The Conservation Commission and the Planning Board begin to look at priority habitat in need of protection.

Year 3: 2008

The Conservation Commission should proceed with plans to develop a Wetlands Protection by-law including provisions to protect a 50' buffer around all bordering vegetated wetlands, isolated wetlands, and greater protection for vernal pools.

The Conservation Commission begins to target priority habitat for protection and works with land owners and local land trusts to protect key parcels.

The Planning Board suggestions for by-law revisions are moved forward towards town acceptance.

Year 4 - 5: 2009 - 2010

Both the Planning Board and the Conservation Commission move to adopt by-laws.

Conservation Commission writes grants to the State Self Help program or obtain funding through the use of Community Preservation Act funds or the EPA Targeted Watershed Grants Program to purchase parcels identified in process above.

GOAL D:**Implement the Open Space and Recreation Plan.**

RESPONSIBLE: Open Space and Recreation Implementation Committee, Tourism Board

Objectives:

- D1. Set up a committee to oversee the plan implementation
- D2. Organize and set up a source of funding for trail maintenance and land acquisition.
- D3. Establish a committee to promote the passage of the Community Preservation Act.
- D4. Increase awareness of existing public resources through the publication of an informational pamphlet.

Year 1: 2006

Recruit and appoint the Open Space and Recreation Plan Implementation Committee to help coordinate all of the goals set forth in the plan. This committee should have representatives from all of the boards and commissions cited in this section as well as additional interested individuals.

Identify sources of money through Rails to Trails, Recreational Trails Grants through DCR and the U.S Fish and the Wildlife Nature in Learning Grants, Linking Girls to the Land that are available for Girl Scout Troops for trail maintenance and land acquisition.

Educate the townspeople and promote the passage of the Community Preservation Act. Money raised by the town through this effort can be used to acquire open space, protect priority habitat for endangered species, repair and maintain historic structures, fund acquisition of historic structures and landscapes, and develop affordable housing within the town. This Act alone will go a long way to help achieve many of the goals listed in the Open Space and Recreation Plan.

Look into producing an informational booklet on the open space and recreation opportunities available within the town.

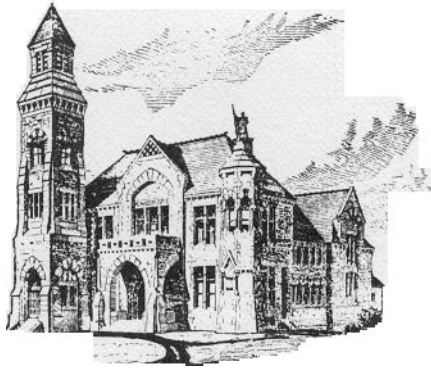
Year 2 – 5: 2007 – 2010

Provide assistance to all committees to help them achieve the goals. This Committee could run educational workshops for the public to help people understand the changes that are proposed. The Committee can help with grant writing and grant seeking responsibilities. The Committee should also be responsible for reaching out to land owners to make them aware of this document and offer opportunities to educate them on some of the land preservation tools listed in Section 5 of this document.

SECTION 10



Public Comment



BOARD OF SELECTMEN
110 Main Street Monson, Massachusetts 01057

Telephone: 413-267-4100 Fax: 413-267-3726
Website: www.monson-ma.gov
July 12, 2005

Open Space and Recreation Plan Committee 110 Main Street
Monson, MA 01057

Re: Town of Monson -Open Space and Recreation Plan

Dear Committee Members

This letter shall serve to fulfill the comment requirement by the Board of Selectmen to the Open Space and Recreation Plan as submitted to the Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

Overall, the Monson Board of Selectmen approves of the plan and specifically its goals and objectives. When the plan was originally put forth in 2000, the selectmen at the time commented on the ambitious nature of the action plan. We now echo those comments with the new goals and objectives put forward. However, we reiterate our confidence in the efforts that will be put forth by a coalition of departments and committees in town, including the Water/Sewer Department, Parks and Recreation Commission, Conservation Commission and Planning Board, to assist in meeting these goals.

The Board of Selectmen is deeply supportive of the important perspective the plan provides for our community. Monson is rich in natural and historic character, and the townspeople share a strong appreciation for these resources. We are confident that this will continue to influence our development choices as we experience unprecedented residential growth.

We thank the members of the Open Space and Recreation Plan Committee for their hard work and attention to detail in completing this plan. The Board of Selectmen appreciates the importance of this work for the future of Monson and all its residents.

Sincerely,

Kathleen C. Norbut, Chairman
Board of Selectmen



PLANNING BOARD
Town Of Monson
110 Main Street
Monson, MA 01057-1331

July 12, 2005

Open Space and Recreation Plan Steering Committee 110 Main Street, Monson, MA 01057

Re: Town of Monson -Open Space Plan

Dear Committee Members:

This letter serves to fulfill the comment requirement by the Planning Board to the Open Space Plan as submitted to the Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

The Planning Board is pleased to endorse the Open Space Plan and its goals and objectives. Furthermore, the Planning Board acknowledges the challenges presented in the action plan and its role in making some of these come to fruition.

The Planning Board thanks the members of the Open Space and Recreation Committee for their hard work and commitment in completing this plan.

Sincerely,


MONSON PLANNING BOARD


Karen King


Tara Hengeman



Timothy W. Brennan, Executive Director

26 Central Street-Suite 34, West Springfield

Massachusetts 01089-2787

Tel.: (413) 781-6045

Fax: (413) 732-2593

www.pvpc.org

July 21, 2005

Leslie A Duthie
Open Space and Recreation Plan Committee
110 Main Street
Monson, MA 01057

Reference: Monson Open Space and Recreation Plan, 2005.

The Pioneer Valley Planning Commission has carefully reviewed the above-referenced plan, and finds it to be consistent with regional goals and objectives.

It is apparent the Town of Monson has carefully assessed its open space/outdoor recreation needs. Your coordinated approach to protect and conserve important cultural/natural resources, coupled with enhancing recreational opportunities, will go far towards realizing the Plan's overall goals.

The Commission is pleased to see Monson placing a priority on preserving its town character through preserving its water resources, agricultural heritage, historic assets, scenic vistas, unique natural areas and wildlife habitat while providing greater variety of recreational opportunities for all its citizens. Your understanding of these issues coupled with a responsible approach towards assessment of municipal needs, proper management of environmentally sensitive areas, and promoting stewardship of the landscape will prove useful as Monson initiates strategies to protect its open spaces and direct development in a fashion consistent with the character of the community.

We congratulate the town in this endeavor and support the community in its efforts in realizing the Plan's goals.

Sincerely,


Timothy W. Brennan
Executive Director

TWB/SMH

cc: Maureen Solomon, PVPC Commissioner

Chip Lapointe, PVPC Alternate

DATE: August 1, 2005

TO: MONSON OPEN SPACE AND RECREATION PLAN COMMITTEE

FROM: Donald R. Lambert~ Member MONSON CONSERVATION COMMITTEE

The MONSON CONSERVATION COMMITTEE Is in full support of the 2005 MONSON OPEN SPACE AND RECREATION PLAN. We look forward to contributing to the achievement of management needs~ goals~ and objectives of this community vision.

In striving to attain the goals set forth in the MONSON OPEN SPACE AND RECREATION PLAN--2005~ the MONSON CONSERVATION COMMISSION looks forward to participate in the cooperative effort envisioned in this plan to work with other local municipal groups and private organizations.

We will make every effort to utilize state funding available only to conservation commissions to create a combined funding package from a number of financial sources to bring this community vision to reality.

Sincerely,



Donald R. Lambert

SECTION 11

REFERENCES

Executive Office of Environmental Affairs Build-Out Plan of Monson, MA
Glen Motzkin of the Harvard Forest, Petersham, MA
Massachusetts Archives. JFK Library, Boston
Mass GIS
Massachusetts Natural Heritage and Endangered Species Program
Massachusetts State Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP)
Monson Assessors Office
Monson Free Library
Monson Historical Society
Monson Master Plan
Monson Water and Sewer Department
Natural Resources Conservation Service, Amherst, MA
Norcross Wildlife Sanctuary
The History of Monson, compiled by the Monson Historical Society, 1960
The Silver Street Historic District, Monson, MA, by Richard Johnson 1981

APPENDIX

- Open Space and Recreation Plan Committee Meeting Minutes
- Notes from the Massachusetts Archives
- Public meeting Agenda and Notes
- Open Space Survey tally
- Information on the selection of Red Tailed Hawk and Kingfish for target species
Chapter land index
- Recreation Land Matrix

Minutes of Preliminary meetings of the Open Space Plan Committee: October

Introductions:

Presentation by Jesse Greene explaining what open space means, accomplishments of the 1999 Open Space Plan, why we need to update the plan and what specific tasks need to be done in order to update it.

Comments compiled during these meetings:

Paul Hatch suggested that we see if we can get the Army Corps of Engineers involved because their support would allow the Town to access good grant monies and financial opportunities in order for Open Space plans to be carried out.

Frank Gustafson suggested that we look into a bridge between Colonial Village and Veterans field so that grandparents and other elderly could come to watch the children using the fields and play grounds more easily. Gretchen subsequently added that a fitness trail around the downtown area, in or around Veterans field would be a great boon to the community. Many of our older citizens are into fitness programs and would be excited to have new opportunities to “work out” in the downtown area. Additional fitness trails are being proposed by Ms. Evans (H.S. Health teacher) along the trails between the Middle School and the High School.

Several people brought up bringing Craig Jalbert in to several meetings to get information about planned well expansion, and water and sewer information for the Open Space Plan.

Ideas for the Public presentation which needs to take place in order to educate the Town’s people about why we need an Open Space Plan:

- a. Emphasize accomplishments that have taken place since the inception of the first plan
- b. At least allude to the losses that the Town has suffered with regard to loss of important Open Space and wildlife habitat. A 1974 inventory of wildlife and open space can be very telling and open the eyes of people who might not think much has changed since then.
- c. Emphasize planning and it’s importance in protecting the “nature of our community”.
- d. Emphasize the opportunities to make the downtown more pedestrian friendly.
- e. Discussion ensued regarding a “booklet” that could be published for use by the Town’s people and visitors. This booklet would be a user friendly copy of the Open Space plan that might include color pictures, historic sites to visit, some basic information about these sites, walking locations including maps of our local “open space” such as Peaked Mt, Cedar Swamp, Silver Street Conservation Area, and the proposed Kolowrat/Homer Drive trail and access to the Town conservation land off of Lower Hampden Road. Include Scenic drives, local farms, bike trails, campgrounds, and fishing places.

Respectfully submitted by Leslie A. Duthie

Open Space and Recreation Plan Committee Meetings

Monday November 1, 2004

Members in attendance: Jesse Greene, chair

Leslie Duthie, Frank Gustafson, Denise Morgan and Gretchen Neggers

Absent: Glenn Colburn, Paul Hatch, Kathleen Norbut

Meeting started at 7pm with the distribution of a list of the Committee members and their email addresses and minutes from the October meeting.

Gretchen Neggers moved that we accept the minutes as written, Frank Gustafson seconded, all voted in favor of accepting the minutes.

Jesse Greene initiated an organizational discussion. Mr. Greene felt that the committee should go over each section together in open discussion. Once we have gone over a section, a committee member would volunteer or be chosen to re-write that section for the final document. Editing would be done by the whole group at the subsequent meeting. Re-writes can be emailed to all committee members prior to the meeting so we would have a chance to look it over and comment.

Denise Morgan looked into printing a “user friendly” Open Space booklet. She suggested a spiral bound book consisting of about 32 pages that could be opened and closed over and over and have no memory. A saddle-stitch bound book would cost about the same amount of money – however, once it is opened, creases develop in the binding, giving it “memory”.

She pictured the book being about the size of a Summerfest booklet (8 x 5 1/2) with a Tyvek material used for the cover. This is a waterproof, indestructible material that could last for some time. A map of the whole town could go into a pocket in the book. Denise also suggested that some of the walking trail maps could be larger and folded to accommodate areas like Peaked Mountain that have a more extensive trail system. She will have a quote from Roberts Printing in Palmer in the next few days and will email it to members. She feels strongly about using local business for the printing.

Denise also asked if a list of “projects” could be compiled by the committee, Conservation Commission, and Parks and Recreation Commission for use by Venture Scouts who need a project to complete their Eagle or Award projects.

Frank said that the scouts have helped with a number of Parks and Rec projects over the years including re-building the horseshoe pits. The upper field at Dr. Rogers will need some additional clearing. Frank said he would ask Tim Pascale to think of projects that they would like done.

Leslie said she had a list of trails that the Conservation Commission was interested in seeing installed.

Jesse Greene suggested that Frank Gustafson and Tim Pascale begin working on the Recreation portion of the Open Space Plan. There is no need to wait until we get to that section. One of the primary needs would be to list all the active recreation sites in Monson, then compare that local list with State and National standards for active recreation. Paul Hatch had mentioned knowing someone at the Pioneer Valley Planning Commission (PVPC) who might have the State and National Standards at a previous meeting. Gretchen said she might also be able to get that information, but would speak with Paul first.

COMMUNITY SETTINGS:

History of the Community

Jesse said he felt the history section was pretty good. We need to add historical maps. Leslie and Jesse are planning trips to Harvard Forest in Petersham to look at the black and white copies of the 1830's maps then traveling to the state archives in Boston to see the original watercolor 1830's maps. This map is reported to be quite detailed and show schools, mills, taverns, inns, churches as well as woodlands and unforested land. Some discussion ensued about getting color copies, not just photos of the original maps. Leslie said she would call the state archives to find out how to go about getting something like that. If they are so fabulous it seems that the town should have a copy of these maps.

After our trip to Petersham we were able to obtain the shape files to print a full page map of Monson showing cultural features of the town in 1830. The Harvard project took some liberties in showing woodlands/meadows/land use of the town (because their project was state-wide), but there is excellent cultural information. The georeferencing of land use might be off a bit, but these are the limitations of transferring old maps onto current topographic maps.

Gretchen said she would ask Dennis Sweriad about a map that might show all the historic features of the Town. She also said that the Historic society has some great pictures that we might want to use in the final document. Technology has improved so much since the 1999 writing of the Open Space plan that we will be able to do a much better job of getting good photos into the final plan.

Jesse said he would like to add information on the Silver Street Hamlet of Town. This area had schools, the Silver Street Chapel, mills, etc. Are there other such hamlets within the town? Each committee member was asked to find out about Historic sites in their section of town prior to the next meeting. What historic features would we like to see added to the maps and Open Space Plan?

Jesse Greene also brought up adding information in the History of the Community section on the 1955 flood. This flood led to the construction of Conant Brook Dam. There were some extreme changes to the Town as a result of the flood. Several committee members related stories. Include pictures?

Gretchen Neggers volunteered to re-write the History of Monson section and improve the language and the Post Industrial Age section of the Plan.

Population Density

This information can be taken directly out of the updated Master Plan. The Master Plan includes the 2000 census data. The 1999 Open Space Plan contains primarily the 1990 census data. Gretchen will check over the data in the Master Plan and update this section of the Open Space Plan. The committee decides to include the population information from the Master plan up to section 1.2.5 (include 1.2.1 through 1.2.4).

Growth Patterns and Trends

Paul Hatch worked on much of this for the Master Plan. It seems like we can take much of this information from the Master Plan as well. This will be discussed at the next meeting with input from Paul.

Gretchen and Leslie will speak with Chip Lapointe about getting a computer copy of the zoning map. The zoning map is a required map for the Open Space Plan.

Website

Gretchen offered to post the meetings, post our minutes and put some pictures on the website as we are working on the plan. Jesse Greene is to write an article for the website. The first one should focus on why Open Space is important and what Open Space means.

The meeting adjourned at 8:25

Respectfully submitted,
Leslie A. Duthie

Open Space and Recreation Plan Meeting Minutes

November 18, 2004

Members in attendance:

Jesse Greene, chairman

Glenn Colburn, Leslie Duthie, Paul Hatch and Stephanie Lazarz

Members absent: Frank Gustafson, Denise Morgan, Gretchen Neggers

Jesse Greene moved to accept the minutes of November 1, 2004

All members are reminded to get sworn in at the Clerks Office. Members who are not officially sworn in are not allowed to vote at meetings so please do this as soon as possible.

The Committee welcomed Stephanie Lazarz, a senior at Monson High School, who has agreed to be part of the Committee. It is our hope that she will add another perspective to our update. We thanked Stephanie for joining us.

Paul Hatch suggested that we take pictures of each member of the Open Space and Recreation Plan committee and post them on the Town of Monson web site. This would allow people to know who we are and give them an opportunity to comment to us when they see us around town.

Jesse created a time line for the Open Space and Recreation Plan. Those in attendance agreed that Thursdays were good meeting days. Our next meeting will be on December 9, 2004 which will be our only meeting in December. At this meeting we should be able to finish the Community Setting portion of the plan. Gretchen Neggers is working on the History of the Community and the Population. Paul Hatch has been working on the Growth Trends and Patterns. Leslie and Jesse have been working on the maps for the first section. The Environmental Inventory and Analysis will be the next section we tackle, but Jesse said he hoped that Frank and Tim Pascale of Parks and Recreation would begin work on the Inventory of Recreation Interest at the same time. The goal is to complete Community Settings, The Environmental Inventory and Analysis and the Inventory of Lands of Conservation and Recreation Interest in order to be prepared for a Public Meeting in mid-March. There will generally be two meetings per month, with three in March to include the Public Meeting.

Paul reminded us to check with Parks and Recreation and other town groups to be sure that we do not schedule our Public Meeting at the same time as a sporting event, school event, or other activity. Once we have had the Public Meeting we can write the Plan Summary and Goals and Objectives for the final draft. We hope to review this final draft in early May.

Paul Hatch spent time working on the Growth and Development Patterns since the last meeting. In Section 3.4.2 Infrastructure, in the Sewer System section he suggested that we strike the last sentence. Although 75% of the town is not serviced by the Town sewer service, that fact will not limit development within the Town.

In section 3.4.3 the Zoning paragraph will need to be changed to reflect the adoption of the Master Plan. “Unless recommendations in the Master Plan are developed, development trends will continue to be determined by current zoning.”

Mr. Hatch also stated that the Overlay for the Water Protection District has been completed. It would be important to include this in the Plan as it protects the recharge areas for the Town wells. Leslie said that she had spoken to Craig Jalbert of the Water and Sewer Department. He is willing to bring any maps or information necessary for the completion of the Open Space and Recreation Plan final draft. Although Mr. Jalbert was unable to make this meeting, he said that he would meet with Jesse and Leslie to be sure that he had the materials that were needed for the next meeting.

Paul also added that we should include the information on the Planned Unit Residential Development (PURD). The original plan mentions the open space and cluster development option that exists within the Town. Although this option has not been implemented within the Town, we do in fact have a Planned Unit Residential Development that has passed the Planning Board and Conservation Commission and is due to be implemented within the next year. Finally Paul stated the last paragraph of the Ecological impacts section should be struck from the plan. The limitations of the town services are not going to limit growth within the town. The committee agreed that we should use the build out analysis map from the EOEA for the Open Space and Recreation plan. Jesse has the disk containing this map and will print it out for use in the plan.

Leslie and Paul discussed adding appropriate portions of the Master Plan to the Open Space and Recreation Plan. Paul will rewrite the Growth and Development Trends section lifting sections from the Master Plan that are appropriate for the Growth Trends and Patterns. Paul will also look through the Master Plan to suggest other sections that should be included in our update. Paul stated, and the Committee agreed, that the Master Plan and Open Space and Recreation plan should mesh and be complementary documents which allow the various boards within the Town to work toward common goals.

Leslie showed a variety of maps that were downloaded from MassGIS that would be appropriate for this section including state wide location, regional context with the surrounding towns, zoning maps, and maps showing roads, railroads, and waterways. It was her goal to present clear, accurate maps for the new plan. It was possible to download the maps and then manipulate them in another program in order to make them relatively clear and legible. Because the document will be printed in black and white, Leslie felt it was important to make sure that the color themes translated well into black and white. She worked with printing the maps several different ways in order to achieve a good quality black and white image. Paul said he would be interested in working on the zoning map to do the same thing. Leslie agreed to email the JPEG files she had saved of the zoning map. Some of the MassGIS maps did not print well, the soils by slope map was difficult to read, even in color. We discussed looking for state soils maps for the next section. Leslie will continue to work on maps for the final plan.

Jesse and Leslie went to the Massachusetts Archives located at the JFK Library in South Boston.

There they were able to view maps of the Town of Monson from 1794, 1830, the 1939 WPA maps of Topography, Land Utilization, Roads and Buildings, Roads and Waterways, and Soil Class, and the 1965 Planning and Development maps. They were able to take digital photos of some of the maps. The 1830's map was by far the most interesting. Monson and Wilbraham both have watercolor maps done by the surveyor Aaron Bliss showing a variety of land uses, and the location of mills, taverns, the Academy, 2 stone quarries, churches and a number of schools within the Town. It was really cool to be able to go and see these historic maps. 11x17 copies were made of the photos we took and distributed to the members.

The researchers at the Harvard Forest have taken the data from the statewide 1830's series and digitized it, overlaying the information on current topographic maps and added wetlands and water bodies. It is their map that shows the most detail of the buildings within the town. Leslie and Jesse were able to get the shape files for Monson (and Wales) from the Harvard forest to compare land uses of the past and present. All information from the Harvard Forest can be used only with permission from Glenn Motzkin and Brian Hall of that institution. The Plan Worksheet encourages the committee to include a historic map of the Town.

The committee discussed the production of a booklet for distribution after the Open Space and Recreation Plan is completed. Glenn Colburn got quotes for printing an 8.5 by 5.5 booklet in one color. He said it is best to work in multiples of 4 pages, as each sheet added to the book makes up 4 pages. His quotes were for a 16 page booklet: 250 for \$654, 500 for \$678 or 1000 for \$733 and a 32 page booklet: 250 for \$876, 500 for \$922 or 1000 for \$1,013. These booklets would not be as fancy as those proposed by Denise, but for the cost we could hand them out free. Dot Jenkins in the Collectors Office had told Jesse Greene that it would be nice to have a map of sites found throughout the town. People come in to her office looking for that kind of information. The committee has felt that producing this kind of booklet would be nice to introduce people to the kinds of passive recreation opportunities that we have in Monson. Jesse Greene said that he spoke with Denise Morgan about this as well. She had anticipated selling the booklet that she had described at the previous meeting. Paul Hatch and Glenn Colburn both thought it would be difficult to sell something, and that the cheaper, free booklet could reach more people. Discussion on this topic to continue.

Jesse Greene stated that he will begin working on the Landscape Character for the Environmental Inventory and Analysis section.

Leslie Duthie has completed an update of the Geology portion of that section and will continue to work on maps for the plan. Glenn said he had read through the section and felt that it was ok, other than needing some basic editing.

Meeting adjourned at 8:20pm

Respectfully submitted by
Leslie A. Duthie

Open Space and Recreation Plan Committee Meeting Minutes

December 9, 2004

Members present:

Jesse Greene, chair

Glenn Colburn, Leslie Duthie, Paul Hatch, Gretchen Neggers, and Denise Morgan

Members absent: Frank Gustafson, Stephanie Lazarz

7:10 meeting brought to order.

Jesse Greene made a motion we accept the minutes as written. Gretchen Neggers second, all in favor.

Committee welcomes Craig Jalbert of the Monson Water and Sewer department to the meeting. Craig has provided the committee with shape files of the Zone II and Zone III water protection overlay districts to be used for maps within the Plan. Although there are no regulations currently associated with the Zone III area, Craig suggested that those might be coming down the line sometime in the future and that the town is well positioned to enact any additional regulations that DEP would require.

Leslie asked Craig about the Zone II region located along the border between Monson and Palmer. This Zone II area is located in Palmer and is zoned General Commercial. Will there be any problems associated with having Commercial zoning within the Water protection overlay? Paul Hatch responded that any additional businesses would be regulated by the current by law. Craig said this area is also the location of the Palmer town wells and the Monson Developmental Center (MDC) wells. So although the General Commercial zoning is located in Palmer, they, too, would be concerned about development occurring in that area.

Leslie also asked about future expansion of the water system in the town of Monson. Are there any areas that the Water Department would target for future development? Mr. Jalbert stated that this area in the northern part of Monson has previously been tested. It is possibly one of our most productive areas for water within the town. The sand is deep and the water could pump out at 800 to 1000 gallons per minute. This is just an estimate, stated Mr. Jalbert, a well would actually have to be dug in order to assess the production of this part of the aquifer. Craig stated that there are some problems in this area – one being that Palmer has had some problems with MBTE in their water supply. Fortunately the Quaboag river separates the two sites and it is the opinion of DEP that although the Palmer side is contaminated with very low levels of MBTE, those should stay on that side of the river and not migrate into the water that Monson might tap at some future date. However, should the town chose to dig a well at this site it is close to the existing lines and it would not be difficult to tie this prospective new facility into the existing lines within the town.

Ms. Duthie had come across the SWAP (Source Water Assessment Program) recommendations on the DEP web site and noted that there were some suggestions that were made to the town. Mr. Jalbert said that the town has enacted all of the suggestions that were made. One of the most significant was the adoption of the water protection overlay for the Zone II areas in Monson. The

by-law that was adopted by the town is considered a model within the state. Its regulations are more stringent than those that the DEP has recommended and leave the town in a good position with regard to protecting its water resources.

Ms. Duthie also asked Mr. Jalbert for a copy of the sewer overlay for the town of Monson to be added to the Open Space and Recreation Plan. Mr. Jalbert said he would be willing to provide that map as well once he installed the ArcView software. He expects to get that software up and running on his computer sometime this winter.

Are there any other issues that the water department is working on? Craig said that the Water Department is working with the Board of Health in town. The Town has adopted a Floor Drain Regulation that is monitored by the Board of Health. The Water Department has also been working on a water conservation plan with some of the major water users in town. Several businesses use water for cooling the machines they run within the business. Two of these have switched to using chillers rather than cool water. This has led to the conservation of hundreds of gallons of water per day. The Water Department will continue to press forward with this.

Mr. Hatch asked if there were any plans to extend the sewer service within the town? Craig said that the existing sewer lines had been designed to be expanded. The sewer pipes that run through the town were sized large to allow for expansion. The sewer plant in Palmer is not running at full capacity and would also welcome additional gallons to be treated, making the plant more efficient. There is some discussion of extending the sewer lines up Wales Road. The Sewer Department is working on getting a Community Development Block Grant for that project.

Mr. Hatch asked for some statistics on the Water and Sewer systems within the town to add to the Open Space and Recreation Plan. Craig said he would forward them to the Committee and was glad he could be of help.

We thanked Mr. Jalbert for coming to the meeting and would look forward to continuing to work with him.

The committee then discussed revisions and edits of Section 3 of the Open Space and Recreation Plans. The changes were noted and revisions will be typed in by Leslie Duthie.

Discussion of the maps ensued. Paul would like to see all the maps in color. Glenn says they are certainly clearer that way, they give a better picture of what is happening in the town. Leslie would like to see the two historic maps – the picture of the 1830 watercolor map from the state archives and the 1830 map digitized by the Harvard Forest Research program in color. The Committee did receive permission from Glenn Motzkin of the Harvard Forest to use their 1830 data in the plan as long as we cited where the information came from. Jesse asked the Committee how they wanted to show data from other towns. Should the maps show only Monson? Should the other towns be shaded slightly to make Monson stand out? Or should the other towns be in the same tone as Monson? The committee felt the data should be present to show what impacts other towns had on Monson. Discussion of the EOEA build-out map included how to make the legend wording clearer and to find an appropriate title for the map. “Build-Out Analysis” was agreed upon.

Photos were received from the Monson Historical Society. Jesse Greene asked Denise Morgan if she would do the layout for the final plan. Ms. Morgan agreed. Once a section was completed and corrected the Committee could email the information to Denise who would put it together for a final booklet. Denise and Glenn discussed printing options and how to handle the color amps most effectively.

At 9pm Leslie moved that the Committee accept Section 3 with the changes that were discussed during the meeting. Paul Hatch seconded. All in favor.

Denise Morgan submitted a quote from Roberts Printing should the Committee decide to move forward with an informational book once the Open Space and Recreation Plan is completed. The costs were as follows:

Cover 8 ½ x 11 80 lb coated glass cover printed with 2 PMS colors on the outside and a die cut with a pocket on the back inside cover:

Printing Costs:		Die Cutting Charges	
250	\$261.10	250	\$125.00
500	\$310.95	500	\$175.00
1000	\$410.60	1000	\$250.00
Additional charge – 1 Die for pocket		\$125.00	

TOTAL COVER COSTS

250	\$511.10
500	\$610.95
1000	\$785.60

Inside Pages Finished flat size of 8 ½ X 11 printed in black ink on both sides on 60 lb. white opaque with a 24 page minimum:

250 books	\$42.50 per every 4 pages	(example – 32 pg book \$340.)
500 books	\$54.00 per every 4 pages	(example – 32 pg book \$432.)
1000 books	\$75.00 per every 4 pages	(example – 32 pg book \$600.)

Made into Booklets – with a saddle stitch

250	\$55.00
500	\$75.00
1000	\$125.00

Spiral Bound

250	\$250.00
500	\$450.00
1000	\$695.00

Meeting adjourned at 9:10pm.

Respectfully submitted by:

Leslie A. Duthie

**Open Space and Recreation Plan Committee
Meeting Minutes**

February 3, 2005

Members present:

Glenn Colburn, Leslie Duthie, Paul Hatch, and Gretchen Neggers,

Members absent: Jesse Greene, Frank Gustafson, Stephanie Lazarz and Denise Morgan

7:20 meeting called to order.

Work is proceeding well on Section 4. The committee went through and edited the sections on Soils and Geologic Features, Landscape Character, Water Resources, Vegetation, Fisheries and Wildlife and Environmental Challenges. Changes were made and noted. Scenic Resources and Unique Environments was looked over, but it is agreed that this section should be re-written after the public meeting.

Jesse Greene and Leslie Duthie have continued to work on maps. The soils map has been completed and two water resources maps including wetlands, FEMA, aquifer recharge, watershed basins and surface water have been completed. Leslie brought a prototype "biomap" that would indicate areas of Core Habitat, Supporting Natural Landscape and vernal pools. These areas are important for endangered species within the town. Glenn Colburn is to continue to work on Fisheries and Wildlife and include some information on vernal pools for the final draft.

Jesse Greene is to begin working on ideas for the public meeting. The committee agrees to use a survey to map the unique environments and scenic resources as was done by UMASS the last time this document was compiled.

Leslie Duthie is to get information on chapter land for section 5. Tim Pascale and Frank Gustafson have looked over the Inventory of Lands of Conservation and Recreation Interest for the beginning of Section 5 and passed their changes along to Leslie. Hillside School and O'Connors Field have been removed from this section, Lunden Miller Pond and Partridge Hollow Campground are to be added.

Gretchen Neggers states that she will take care of the ADA reports for the new plan, as she had done them for the original plan.

8:50 Meeting adjourned.

Respectfully submitted by:

Open Space and Recreation Plan Committee Meeting Minutes

February 17, 2005

Members present: Jesse Greene, chairman

Leslie Duthie, Paul Hatch, Denise Morgan

Members absent: Glenn Colburn, Frank Gustafson, Stephanie Lazarz ,Gretchen Neggers

7:00: Reviewed minutes from previous meeting.

Discussion of a date for the Public meeting. March 17th is the high schools production of the one-act plays, although they will be held at Granite Valley, not the high school, perhaps our meeting dates should not conflict. The 15th and 16th are meetings with other boards, so the 22nd and 23rd are suggested as possible dates. Leslie has received an email from Kathleen Norbut. She can attend on the 15th or the 23rd, also suggested dates in April. Consensus at the table is that March is better. Leslie will poll other members through email to determine a date. March 22 or March 23rd are dates agreed upon by those at the table.

Paul suggests that rather than having the meeting in the High School cafetorium, perhaps it should be in a smaller room in case we only have a few people show up. Jesse Greene suggests the library which has large tables and might be a more manageable setting. If we have a lot of people attend, perhaps we can move to the cafetorium. Leslie will discuss set up of the projectors and location with Alan Morin, librarian and media specialist at the High School. Jesse is to speak with Mr. Peters about using the High School and fill out the appropriate forms to get the room for the meeting.

Jesse Greene asks if there is anyone we should invite to the meeting? Leslie suggests the selectboard. Paul suggests that Jesse go to the selectboard's meeting on March 8th to discuss our progress and mention the meeting several times. The selectboard meeting is televised on the local cable access channel and this is a good way to get some publicity. Leslie has sent an article on Open Space to the Palmer Journal. It also alludes to the fact that a public meeting is planned for March. Additional letters of support will be solicited, perhaps from Ed Clark, and Greene will write a press release to go into the paper closer to the meeting. Hopefully these public notices will help to get people to attend the meeting so we can get some input from the community.

Agenda for the Public Meeting:

Jesse will introduce himself and the project. Members of the committee can sit among the audience. Mr. Greene will introduce the committee and ask them to come forward so that people can associate our names and faces.

Greene will then do a presentation on open space, and why public participation is important to the creation of the Open Space and Recreation Plan. What is the value of Open Space should be presented. People may view open space and "wasted land", loss of tax money, etc. Why SHOULD we protect open space? Greene will cover the advantages of having a plan, how the plan can help the town as we continue to grow. Greene will show slides of different landscape types and allow the

audience to rate them on a card. How important are forests, fields, water, wetlands to each person? This might help us to understand what kinds of places people feel are important to the character of the town.

Once the presentation is complete, the public will be asked to fill out the survey. Mr. Hatch states that the survey should tell us what is most important, and what is the goal of protection. To Hatch it is protection of the slopes, particularly the easterly and westerly slopes that are visible as we drive through town. To Duthie, it's probably wetlands. What do other people feel is important?

Greene is curious about what existing facilities that people use. What does the public take their visitors to see? Hatch wants to know how much people are willing to spend to protect these places.

Greene presented a sample survey. The committee went over some of the questions. There was discussion of wording of some of the questions. Paul Hatch still believes the questions should be hard – do people want to spend money or impose regulations to protect land? Group discussed simplification of the questionnaire. Instead of a specific number of times for visiting sites – never, seldom, frequent should be adequate. Instead of age groups – toddlers, elementary age children, teens / young adults, and adults / seniors.

“How many times have you or your family visited any of the following registered historic sites?” Paul asked that the Unitarian Church be removed from the list – or add all the other churches. St. Patrick's is our only “registered” historic church and the only other “registered” building is Memorial Hall. Denise Morgan asked what was meant by “historic main street”? Perhaps we could be more specific? Norcross House? Horatio Lyon House? She suggested including the House of Art. She suggests removing the word “registered” from the question. Hatch suggests adding the GAR room in Memorial Hall.

Old survey question #14:

”I would....

Vote for town supported land acquisition

Volunteer to work with landowners

Donate land to the town

Rewrite my deed to limit future use of my land

Sell land to the town at a bargain price

Sell or contribute a conservation restriction to protect my land from future development

Sell land to the town at fair market value”

This is still an ok question – but rather than multiple answer columns it should be just a simple yes or no answer.

In working on survey, Duthie suggests these updated questions...

I would.....

Vote for town-supported land acquisition

Vote for town-supported purchase of trail easements or greenways connecting neighborhoods,

schools, downtown
Donate land to the town
Donate money to a “land acquisition fund” (tax deductible)
Restrict the future development of my land
Sell land to the town at a “bargain” price
Sell or donate a conservation restriction to protect my land from future development

Greene asked the committee if it wanted to discuss ATV trails. Duthie says ask if people are willing to pay for ATV trails. Hatch says his experience is that ATVs use private land, whether they have permission to use the land or not.

Greene asks how many of the end questions should we include from the end of the old survey?
Why did you chose to live in Monson
How long have you lived in town
Age
Residence – Hatch says it doesn’t matter whether people own or rent, scrap this question.
Acreage owned.

These questions, other than the one asking whether the person owns or rents are deemed ok.

Greene continued to discuss the way the public meeting should proceed. Once people fill out the survey, they should move to a table to continue to discuss areas that they feel are “special” in town. Each table will have a topographic map that people will be encouraged to write on. Committee members will facilitate discussion at each table asking people to mark the location of their house. Greene suggests saying “We have identified things in Monson that are important to the Committee members, now we would like to know what is important to you.” The goal of this is to identify areas of town that the committee may not know about. Places that people like to go, or activities that they engage in that we have not considered.

More work seems to be required on the survey. Greene will continue to work on a rewrite of the survey. Jesse asks that we change our meeting schedule, he would rather not meet on the 3rd, Leslie cannot attend that meeting either. Next meeting of the Open Space and Recreation Committee will be on March 10th. If we need another meeting prior to the public meeting, March 17th is still open. Public meeting will be discussed and survey will be finalized at that time.

Jesse Greene asked where and how we would like to distribute the surveys. Denise Morgan said the more information that we can get the better. Perhaps the Committee would share its results with other boards within town. There could be some valuable information for the tourism board as a result of these surveys. Morgan asks how the surveys were distributed the last time? Could we put them on the web site? Hatch agrees with getting them on the web site. Further discussion of this would need to include Gretchen Neggers, since she is currently posting our minutes, etc. on the town web site.

Meeting adjourned 9:35pm

Respectfully submitted by:
Leslie A. Duthie

Open Space and Recreation Plan Committee Meeting Minutes

March 10, 2005

Members in attendance: Jesse Greene, chair, Glenn Colburn, Leslie Duthie and Gretchen Neggers

Members absent: Paul Hatch, Denise Morgan

7:15 pm:

Gretchen corrected the minutes from February 17th, In the section on historic sights in Monson, it should read the “GAR” room in Memorial Hall (Grand Army of the Republic), not DAR. Minutes accepted with the correction.

Discussion of the Public Meeting to be held on Wednesday, March 23rd at 7pm at the High School Cafetorium. (6:30 set up):

Meeting Agenda:

Introductions

Presentation on Open Space

Presentation on tools and programs for preserving open space

Incorporate recreation, what is important – trails, fields, bikeways, etc.

Ms. Neggers asked that the presentation stress that this is a “real” plan. We actually use it. Planning needs be specific. She also stated that it is important to get community feed back. The plan means something, the importance of how open space affects the quality of our lives. Although development will continue to occur, we need to relate the importance of planning to the development and incorporate open space.

Leslie will add information on regulation to the tools and programs section of the presentation so that people understand what increased regulation might mean within the town.

The presentation should be kept to approximately 30 minutes. Mr. Hatch had mentioned this at the previous meeting as well.

After the presentation, the Committee members will act as facilitators at tables. The public will fill out the survey. Committee members will answer questions about the survey and take notes on any comments or discussion that occurs at the table.

Discussion questions will be provided to stimulate further discussion after the survey is completed. There will be a mapping activity for people to mark where they live, important areas they would like to be conserved, etc.

A large map of Monson will be provided with “stars” on key features like Peaked Mountain, Flynt Park, Keep Homestead, Cedar Swamp Silver Street, Dean Pond.

Gretchen and Jesse both mentioned that the Master Plan recommends Open Space preservation and the Open space plan is the tool to do it. They both added that we are here to work with developers to preserve a greenway through the town. Jesse says we should help them appreciate the people’s

need of open space and allow them to reap the benefits of providing open space adjacent to new development.

Mr. Greene stated that the building blocks of a greenway are conservation, recreation, and historical aspects. Greenways don't mean no development, they mean linking areas. Although the downtown is developed it is still possible to link the north and south end by installing narrow greenways such as river walks.

Glenn said that people, nationwide are looking for greenway connections in their town and between adjoining towns.

Gretchen says keep the discussion local – focus on the town, the state, not nationwide data. It is statewide sprawl that is threatening us, the Open Space and Recreation Plan is a state guideline, a state recommendation.

There is a consensus among the members that the people of the town care about what is pretty; what is theirs, but they don't necessarily understand the terminology that we use about open space – fragmentation, greenways, etc. If this can be cleared up in a brief discussion it might be helpful.

Gretchen will take care of getting the surveys printed. The surveys are an important tool for the planning process. We need people's opinions, their feed back. She suggests we talk about the survey while we are out in the community so people understand why we are asking these questions.

Gretchen will also design and put together flyers for the meeting. She will email them around so that Leslie and Jesse can put them up in places.

Leslie is to get CPA brochures, resource materials, and pamphlets to help explain conservation options, tools, etc.

Jesse will email his outline to all committee members so that we know how the talk will go.

Adjourn 8:30

Respectfully submitted by:
Leslie A. Duthie

Open Space and Recreation Plan Committee Meeting Minutes

April 28, 2005

Members in attendance: Jesse Greene, chair, Glenn Colburn, Leslie Duthie and Barry Cady

Members absent: Paul Hatch, Denise Morgan, Gretchen Neggers

The group met to discuss the goals and visions that they felt should be addressed in the final chapters of the Open Space and Recreation Plan. This will be the final group meeting of this committee until the last sections are written. Once written, they will be emailed to each member of the Committee for comment. The final document will be put together. The Committee will then meet one more time to discuss final editing, corrections and layout.

Flynt Park and revitalization of this area of town came up several times in the surveys. Mr. Cady said that the Parks and Recreation Commission is working on making some improvements to the park. The Commission is working on a proposal to install lighting at the fields. Parking has been improved at the various soccer fields and the road that goes up to the third field has been installed. Work is still progressing on creating a third soccer field at the site.

With additional lighting, improvements to parking, and a third field it might be possible for the town to hold soccer tournaments at this site. The town may also be able to rent out the fields to other organizations. This would provide some money for Parks and Rec to use for maintenance and expansion of the facilities.

In addition to the soccer and baseball fields at Flynt Park, there are trails that the public can use. The Mt. Ella trail is an old carriage road and there is erosion on parts of this trail because it has not been maintained. Although many people talk about replacing the tower, it is the feeling of this group that it is unlikely that it will be replaced. The tower may pose more of a liability than an asset. There was discussion among the group that indicated some signage along the existing trails might allow people to imagine what this park looked like in Mr. Flynt's time. Interpretive signs that indicated where the zoo and tower were located might be nice.

Walking and Hiking seemed to be very popular activities within the town. Some ideas that the committee discussed were:

- Establish a town wide trail system

- This trail could be used for hiking and biking

- Establish a historic trail – or more activities around historic sites.

- Downtown walking areas – generalized walking trails

- Measured trails for people who want to run or walk certain distances

Finding another location for a public swimming area is of interest to the townspeople. Although we have 3 ponds located within the town (Stagecoach, Paradise, and Pulpit Rock) there is no public

access to any of these locations. There is no public parking area at any of these locations either. Ice hockey seems to be very popular within the town. Is it possible to create a skating area? A place where hockey could take place? How would we be able to maintain something like that? Interest in adult softball league noted.

Another interest within the town seems to be protecting views and ridgelines. Protect the view from Westview farms came up a number of times in the survey. Glenn Colburn said he thought that this was the view of the western ridge – Flynt Mt., Chicopee Mt and perhaps Bunyan Mt.

Historic buildings seem to be important as indicated in the survey. Mr. Colburn said that people seem to recognize the importance of these buildings. Jesse wanted to know how we recognize and acknowledge the importance of some of the significant structures that aren't necessarily in the downtown area. The first houses in Monson? Areas like the Silver Street settlement? The old Norcross Tavern and ballroom? There are a number of historic sites within the town that the older generations remember, but none of this is being passed on to the newer members of the Community – either people who have recently moved in or the younger generations. These are things that the Historic Commission might be able to help us with and provide information about.

Glenn Colburn felt that additional open space should link pieces. We need to work on a strategy to link together the open space parcels that we have. Not just buy pieces that are isolated. There has been some movement toward that kind of acquisition, but with development proceeding so quickly now it might be worthwhile to start identifying areas where we need to do more work to make those habitat connections for wildlife.

The committee felt it would be good to save the document as PDF files. It was agreed that this would be a good way to save the completed document and put it on the town web site.

Mr. Greene wanted to know if we should put the draft Open Space and Recreation plan on the web site and allow people to comment. Leslie Duthie stated that she felt the process had included some opportunity for people to give their input – the survey – the public meeting. It was time to write the final document and be done with the process.

At 8:30 the meeting adjourned.

Respectfully submitted by:
Leslie A. Duthie

Massachusetts Archives
November 15, 2004

JFK Library, Boston, MA
Jesse J. Greene and Leslie A. Duthie

Maps Researched:

1794 Series Vol. 5 pg. 16 #1139

Admatha Blodgett, Surveyor

1830 Series Vol. 3 pg. 6 #1972

Aaron Bliss, Surveyor

1939 Series WPA maps

WPA topography, roads and buildings, land utilization, soil class, roads and waterways

1965 Printed Plan #4848

Department of Commerce and Development, Division of Planning

Photo:

Monson State Hospital

156A-2 Box 14

Digital photographs were taken of

1794 map, 1830 map, 1939 WPA maps – Roads and Buildings and Land Utilization

Monson State Hospital photo from 1981

Notes from the maps:

1794 Series Admatha Blodgett, surveyor

Town of Monson in the County of Hampshire

“Besides the mountains delineated on the plan there are a number of Barren Hills and Morasses (tract of low, soft watery ground, bog; swamps; marsh)

This plan is protracted on a scale of 10 parts to an inch, each of which parts is 20 rods

Done in Monson on March 11, 1795

1830 Series

Green shades – woodlands, all the mountains are covered with woodlands

Some of the features identified on the map include:

”Seder Swamp”

“A hill called Picked Mountain”

“Academy”

The survey of the Town of Monson made in 1830 – 31 by

Jacob Thompson

Aaron Bliss, surveyor

Abraham Haskell

A committee appointed by the town for that purpose

Information on the back of the Monson State Hospital photo:

1895 State Hospital for Epileptics established on land of the state Primary School for Boys. One of the 3 original almshouses established in 1852. The name was changed to Monson State Hospital in 1910.

Open Space and Recreation Plan Committee Public Meeting Notes

March 23, 2005

Presentation on “What is Open Space Planning and How Can it Help our Community?”
“Tools for Land Conservation”

Participants were asked to fill out a survey.

The following are meeting notes taken in small group activity centers:

Greene group: Len and Roslyn Harringtons, Alfreda Tiernan, Sarah Peet, Ed Harrison

Coen Property – should be made accessible to the public, it was felt that more of our public lands should be made accessible to the people of town. Although we are not aware of any special features on Coen, it was felt that people would endorse public access to any conservation commission lands. People in the group mentioned several times the importance of being able to have places to walk or walk on trails.

Historic buildings should have interpretation of structure, signs or something else so that people are aware of the buildings significance:

“Emily Dickenson House”

Historic Walks could be implemented in several sections of town to include these significant buildings and their interpretation.

It was felt that the historic character of the town should be preserved.

There was significant interest in the history of the quarry and recreation on Moran Family lands.

This was talked about extensively. People remember the dump – the fact that the quarry operation was in place for so long. Many thought there were some nice trails that link the past to the present on the Moran lands – the quarry line, the rock house. These were features that were mentioned by the group.

Can we prevent chain or box stores from town? Some mentioned that they thought that was part of the discussion of the Master Plan – how to keep chains out of the center of town, but obviously that was not carried out.

Registration of Buildings on the Historic Register. Would this help preserve some of the history of town.

Downtown traffic “parking” – is there enough parking on Main Street – could the parking and accessibility to stores be improved?

Walkability – there should be pedestrian connections between areas of town, for example, connecting the schools and the neighborhoods to the north and south. River walks through the center of town could add connections from one end of town to the other.

Derelict Buildings were brought up as a problem within the town. Some expressed interest in cleaning them up – tearing them down, re-using the buildings for things like elderly housing perhaps.

Mention of some areas where buildings were used for elderly housing where each person/couple lived in an apartment with some kitchen facilities, but also a main dining room where people came and ate together. Perhaps some kind of recreation center where senior activities took place.

Interest in wildlife connections – what are you doing for the animals? Shouldn't there be a way for them to get from one place to another. It seems important to link protected open spaces together.

Development on high peaks was also a concern. Can we protect Chicopee Mt? That seems like an important and noticeable peak that should be kept from having houses plastered all over it.

Morgan group: Tim Pascale, Charles Tiernan, Jim and Mary Newland

Is Dean Pond in Monson, or is it regarded as Brimfield? Dean Pond is actually in Monson AND Brimfield – access is through Brimfield and the Beach area is located in Brimfield, but I think this is a shared resource

Could we depict trails for horseback riding where it is allowed?

Farmland and agriculture – preservation should be a priority. Take as much land back as possible for preservation when it is passed on to siblings rather than allowing them to sell it off to developers. Group does not want change.

Limit development by rezoning portions of the town.

Limit growth because the schools are already over capacity.

Control development to preserve fresh air, good water supply, and scenic vistas should all be preserved for the town/future generations.

Bring back the mountain part of Flynt Park. Renew the trail system – especially where they have washed out by putting in water bars. Trails should be made safe to walk on or use for biking? Signage should be incorporated to this area – can we show the history of the park – the location of the zoo, pavilion, tower, etc.

Group felt it was important to clean up vacant buildings – south Main Street School and Zero corporation were mentioned in particular. The group felt that these owners let the buildings stand too long so they will deteriorate and become unusable, wasted. Why wait until the buildings are beyond repair or are too costly to renovate? Town should put big fees on unoccupied buildings to motivate clean up or usage.

Is it possible to take M&M chemical by eminent domain and do something with it?

Duthie says it may not be in town's best interest to "take" old factories because of clean up liability. M&M Chemical (Cushman Street) actually has an active and present owner.

Improve roads, especially Lower Hampden Road.

The town is in desperate need of good Restaurants

Build a pavilion at Flynt Park or Veterans Field. There is a feeling that one is needed in town for

events like Summerfest, Concerts in summer. It was mentioned that a pavilion could be used for the public such as large family picnics or even small wedding parties- events they could book with the town as we do carwashes and the use of other town facilities etc.

Interest expressed in a place to go swimming – an outdoor, public pond since the ones in town are all private (Pulpit Rock, Stagecoach Lake, Paradise Lake) Maybe the Lunden Miller Pond? .

Neggers Group: Richard Guertin, Clarks, Beth Allen

The survey is very important. We need to know why people are not taking advantage of local resources. Why should we create more protected lands if we are not using what is already available?

Many people don't know these areas are there

- we should market the town open space by providing a series of nature walks so that people can become familiar with our resources.

Tours of historic sites should be provided for the same reason

Look elsewhere to see what we have right here – there is a need to promote ourselves.

For example, NYC has Central Park to fulfill a community need. What need are we fulfilling within Monson?

Open Space Planning –

Being out in nature provides: a calming effect, escape from the pressures of life, is something that we can pass on to other generations.

Master Plan provides a vision of open space but wants to do it without penalizing land owners.

Master Plan Committee felt it was important to maintain the look of our “country roads” – this can be done by using setback bylaws and allowing common driveways. Right now in town we are losing the country road look because of the residential development and the current zoning standards.

How do you control growth???

The most urgent challenge is to limit development on slopes in order to promote vistas.

Housing development is currently unrestricted. If you don't go on a road for a year or two, the next time you drive down it you can feel astounded by the new houses that have been built –

Silver Street, Bethany Road, Gate Street, Longview Drive, Cote Road, Wood Hill

This development has an impact on our schools – the school costs and the school buildings.

Best Quality of the town –

Main Street:

We have a very good main street with things you notice as you go through such as the variety of architecture, the historic buildings. New development gets away from this uniqueness because it doesn't promote the diverse look in neighborhoods.

Monson Topography is one of the good qualities of our town because it works in our favor, limiting the kinds and locations where development can occur.

Rural Character is another one of Monson's best qualities

Add better marketing that keeps the town quaint

Master Plan calls for good planning and lower taxes, need to address it now, don't wait until it is too late.

Monson offers young families and children many things. We need to do more for seniors and caregivers.

Downtown parking is horrendous

Inspect industrial buildings to limit environmental contamination.

PROTECT THE WATER SUPPLY by limiting/prohibiting development in zone 1 and zone 2 water supply district.

Can we investigate using people's property for private trails and horse trails – originally that was how Peaked Mountain (and Moran Family) was. Although the land was private, the trails were available for people and Horses to use (People and ATVs)

Senior walking and fitness trails in the downtown area were seen as an important addition the town should consider. Including shuffleboard courts.

Chicopee Brook – fish and the reemergence of a natural habitat – The first ever inventory of the Chicopee Brook was done last year by one of the 4th grade classes and Mickey Novack (US Fish and Wildlife). It is astounding how much has returned after the spill – the brook is teeming with aquatic insects – as well as fish.

Look at streams for improvement of water quality and wetland habitat.

Educate young people and

Colburn group: Kathleen Norbut, Rebecca Jacobs, Jean Porwoll

Which part of the survey do you find most intriguing or important, why? Schools and other organizations, seniors, legion, Monson Health Center, Library, Town Hall – Not addressed?

Do you have a vision?

No Walmart, regulation of growth on slopes.

What would you like to see as a result of the plan?

Preserve more Open Space, more hiking and biking trails, Bed and Breakfast type Inns. Is this a use being suggested for some of the farms that were located on your map?

What is Monson's most urgent challenge?

Housing starts – too many of them, in the wrong place. Control of growth – not happening now.

Protection of Monson's water quality – especially difficult because all of our wells and our best

aquifer recharge area is along Rt. 32. Several other aquifer recharge areas were located on the map along Twelvemile Brook and Temple Brook in particular. Also other areas along Upper Hampden Road near the border with Hampden. Testing of private wells should be initiated, only 15% of the country's well water supply is tested. More work should be done to protect people's water quality. Infrastructure – not what it should be?

Monson's best quality?

Rural character, under-utilized historic sites, Monson's rivers. Dick Elliot thought that it was important to put nameplates on the town rivers. He felt that if people knew the names they might care more about the rivers, they might mean more to people.

Something missing?

Renovation of Flynt park including re-building the tower. A public pond for swimming one was identified on East Hill Road. Could it be possible to purchase, promote this pond for public swimming?

Boat access on rivers and ponds?

The eastern ridge including most of East Hill Road was identified for its scenic value

The Western Ridge from Peaked Mountain, up to Paradise lake, Flynt Mountain and up to Bald Peak was identified as important.

Another ridge from the schools through Moran Family land and up to Chicopee Mountain was indicated as important on the map.

Areas identified on the map:

Plumley Falls was considered a unique feature, scenic feature within the town.

There are so many roads that people in this group liked. It was difficult to name them all, but Silver Street was identified on the map. Silver Street has fabulous old maple trees that enclose the road. These will begin disappearing with increased development along this road.

Ridge lines to protect include the High School – Bunyan Mountain area. Also indicated the old Quarry area as important.

The Western Ridge line from Peaked Mountain to Flynt Mountain and extending toward Bald Peak was identified.

The farmland view from the Keep was considered notable. Protect and limit development on Pinnacle Peak to maintain the view from the Keep homestead.

The Hulse Farm was also listed as a notable sight – something that should be protected from development as well.

Compiled by:

Leslie A. Duthie

Open Space & Recreation Survey Tally

1. What types of lands do you feel are most important to protect?

1 - most important 2 – important 3 - somewhat important 4 - not important 5- don't know

Agricultural lands 1 2 3 4 5

TOTAL 28 19 7 0 0

Scenic properties, Natural features 1 2 3 4 5

TOTAL 33 13 9 0 0

Land protecting water resources & drinking water 1 2 3 4 5

TOTAL 48 7 0 0 1**

Wildlife habitat 1 2 3 4 5

TOTAL 39* 10 4 2 0

Lands for active recreation (e.g. soccer, tennis, softball) 1 2 3 4 5

TOTAL 8 24 16 5 0

Lands for passive recreation (e.g. walking, hiking) 1 2 3 4 5

TOTAL 27 19 10 1 0

Historic sites 1 2 3 4 5

TOTAL 24 23 9 2 1

2. What landscapes, views, locations or other outdoor experiences do think most symbolize Monson's unique character? *List them in order of importance.*

Peaked Mt/Lunden Miller. – 21, Westview Farms – 11, Ridge lines/views of Mountains – 7, Granite and Historic - 7, Downtown – 7 , Conant Brook Dam - 7, Flynt Park-6, Farms - 5, Keep - 4, Recreation lands - 4, Dean Pond - 4, Vistas – 4, Hulse -3, All – 2, Chicopee Mt. - 2, Norcross - 2, Echo Hill - 2, McCray land - 2, old Quarry-2, Farm view up and down Stebbins Road -2, Korans - 2, Stonewalls – 2, Wetlands on 32 - 2, Forest, Valley Views, Sunburg Farm on Reimers, Arooth Farm, Nothe Farm on Lower Hampden, Country Roads, Meadows, Hillsides, Beaver Dams, country landscapes, Silver Street, Rock House, natural springs, clean air, schools, Frietag and Baldwin Ponds, Veterans Park, First Church, Town Hall, mountain trails, undeveloped woodlands, Hovey Road, Bunyan Mt, between Alden Thrasher and Bradway Road, old mill and dam on Reimers, Moulton Hill and Wales Road.

3. A greenway is a linear area of protected land, often including river access, walking trails and or bicycle trails. Would you or any members of your family use a greenway if it were available in Monson?

Yes # **47**

No# **11**

4. Would you or any members of your family be interested in a site that allowed river access to the Quaboag River for fishing or boating? (motorless, kayak)

Yes # **45**

No# **9**

Maybe# **1**

5. I am interested in more hiking, biking, or walking trails on public parcels within Monson.

Yes# **46**

No# **5**

6. Would you or any of your family members be interested in activities surrounding the History of Monson? (Quarry Walks, History Walks, a History of Monson Trail)

Yes# **50**

No# **4**

Maybe **1**

7. I would be interested in a fitness trail, accessible for all ages in Monson

Yes# **45**

No# **8** already have one (Lunden-Miller)

8. Do you ever take out-of-town relatives or guests for a drive to “show off” scenic parts of Monson? If so, where do you take them?

Peaked Mt. - 16, Public Farms - 15, Conant Brook - 9, Keep - 4, Downtown – 4, No - 4, Dean Pond – 5, Moran Family Land/Rock House – 3, Downtown old Houses – 3, Brimfield State Forest - 2, Silver Street, Flynt Park, Country Roads, Norcross, Garden club displays, Driving tour –Lower Hampden Road - 2, East Hill Road - 2, to Dean Pond, Keep Homestead, Wales Road to Moulton Cemetery, Brimfield Road, Butler Road.

9. How frequently do you or members of your family visit local farms for any of the following activities?

1 – very often 2 – often 3 – somewhat often 4 – rarely 5- never

Apple Picking 1 **2** 2 **8** 3 **26** 4 **12** 5 **6**

Creamery 1 **9** 2 **20** 3 **14** 4 **9** 5 **3**

Buying Produce 1 **15** 2 **16** 3 **10** 4 **8** 5 **6**

Hayrides 1 **3** 2 **3** 3 **12** 4 **15** 5 **21**

Sight-seeing 1 **15** 2 **6** 3 **18** 4 **9** 5 **2**

Other _seeing animals, gift shopping, Monson corn, strawberry picking - 2

Which farms do you visit? Westview **38**

Korans **26**

Echo Hill **19**

Farmers Mkt **1**

MAS **1**

Murphy's **1**

Kettermans **2**

10. How frequently did you or members of your family participate in the following outdoor activities during the past 12 months?

1 – very often 2 – often 3 – somewhat often 4 – rarely 5- never

ATV Sports	1 3	2 2	3 3	4 4	5 40
Biking	1 3	2 5	3 17	4 15	5 14
Boating	1 5	2 6	3 8	4 13	5 21
Camping	1 2	2 11	3 15	4 12	5 14
Canoeing	1 2	2 9	3 7	4 14	5 19
Equestrian	1 3	2 2	3 1	4 3	5 42
Fishing	1 9	2 5	3 8	4 11	5 19
Geocaching	1 3	2 0	3 2	4 2	5 39
Hiking	1 23	2 12	3 10	4 6	5 3
Hunting	1 4	2 4	3 2	4 1	5 42
Ice Skating	1 1	2 1	3 9	4 13	5 29
In-Line Skating	1 0	2 2	3 4	4 7	5 40
Skating	1 0	2 1	3 7	4 5	5 38
Picnicking	1 4	2 11	3 17	4 14	5 6
Running	1 7	2 4	3 9	4 8	5 24
Skateboarding	1 0	2 2	3 2	4 3	5 45
X-Country Skiing	1 1	2 8	3 5	4 7	5 33
Snowmobiling	1 3	2 1	3 2	4 4	5 43
Swimming	1 10	2 11	3 15	4 6	5 12
Walking	1 31	2 13	3 3	4 3	5 1

Other: finding natural springs, cellar holes, plants never seen before

11. How frequently did you or members of your family participate in the following sports during the past 12 months?

1 – very often 2 – often 3 – somewhat often 4 – rarely 5- never

Baseball	1 9	2 8	3 0	4 9	5 29
Basketball	1 7	2 8	3 2	4 8	5 32
Field Hockey	1 0	2 1	3 1	4 3	5 50
Football	1 2	2 1	3 1	4 8	5 42
Golf	1 7	2 0	3 4	4 14	5 27
Gymnastics	1 0	2 1	3 2	4 6	5 45
Ice Hockey	1 1	2 0	3 3	4 4	5 46
Lacrosse	1 0	2 0	3 0	4 3	5 50
Softball	1 9	2 6	3 2	4 3	5 37
Soccer	1 15	2 5	3 2	4 4	5 29
Swimming	1 8	2 13	3 8	4 8	5 20
Tennis	1 2	2 4	3 7	4 6	5 34

Track 1 3 2 2 3 4 4 6 5 39

Other: Photography, horseshoes, volleyball, yoga

12. Please rate the availability of recreational opportunities in Monson for the following groups.

1- very good 2- good 3- adequate 4 – needs improvement 5 – do not know

Pre-School Children 1 8 2 6 3 18 4 11 5 12

Elementary Children 1 14 2 11 3 11 4 8 5 10

Teens / Young Adults 1 8 2 8 3 11 4 19 5 9

Adults / Seniors 1 2 2 10 3 17 4 17 5 6

Children with disabilities 1 1 2 2 3 6 4 23 5 22

Adults with disabilities 1 0 2 1 3 4 4 25 5 22

13. How often do you or family members use the following recreation facilities?

1 – very often 2 – often 3 – somewhat often 4 – rarely 5- never

Cushman Field 1 1 2 1 3 6 4 17 5 29

Rogers Field 1 11 2 7 3 6 4 7 5 20

Veterans Baseball, Soccer Fields 1 11 2 9 3 4 4 6 5 23

Veterans Field Playground 1 9 2 8 3 2 4 11 5 24

Skate Park, Basketball Court 1 0 2 4 3 5 4 9 5 34

Tennis Courts 1 0 2 4 3 11 4 11 5 29

Quarry Hill Playgrounds, Baseball, Soccer fields 1 11 2 6 3 7 4 8 5 21

Quarry Hill Pool 1 3 2 8 3 7 4 14 5 15

Monson High School Fields 1 3 2 2 3 7 4 7 5 33

Granite Valley Fields, Track 1 1 2 7 3 9 4 7 5 28

Cedar Swamp walking trails 1 2 2 6 3 5 4 10 5 29 need improvement

Conant Brook Dam 1 3 2 12 3 16 4 9 5 14

Dean Pond 1 5 2 9 3 13 4 14 5 18

Dave Grieve Park 1 1 2 7 3 11 4 11 5 23

Flynt Park hiking trails 1 3 2 11 3 15 4 17 5 13

Keep Homestead Trails 1 2 2 9 3 17 4 11 5 15

Peaked Mountain 1 15 2 5 3 14 4 7 5 7

Lunden – Miller Pond 1 10 2 8 3 10 4 5 5 21

Silver Street Conservation Area 1 6 2 4 3 4 4 8 5 34

Monson Senior Citizens Center 1 2 2 3 3 5 4 8 5 35

Town Administration Building Gym 1 1 2 1 3 2 4 8 5 41

Other - Brimfield State Forest

14. What new or additional recreational opportunities, if any, should be promoted in Monson?

Please list in order of importance.

Adult softball - 3, ice rink and hockey - 3, more hiking trails - 3, bike trail - 3, downtown greenway/riverwalk - 2, X-country skiing, ice skating on veterans field, Adult walking group, walking tours, lighted skateboard park, more sports, activities for teens, canoeing, fishing derby, improve tennis courts, building homes for animals, seeing wildlife, horse trails, expand downtown playground – sand box and water play, nature hikes, access to Chicopee Brook, public access to lakes, Handicapped/wheel chair accessible trails, Don't know any.

15. How many times have you or members of your family visited any of the following historic sites during the past 12 months?

1 – very often 2 – often 3 – somewhat often 4 – rarely 5- never

House of Art	1	9	2	8	3	16	4	11	5	10
Memorial Hall GAR Museum	1	1	2	7	3	10	4	13	5	21
Norcross House	1	10	2	10	3	16	4	9	5	7
Keep Homestead Museum	1	7	2	9	3	15	4	13	5	9
Jacob Thompson House Museum	1	3	2	3	3	7	4	9	5	34

16. Please list any historic sites in Monson which the Town should make a priority to preserve:

Memorial Hall – 13, Library - 8, Quarry – 5, Quarry RR Line – 5, Keep – 5, Jacob Thompson – 4, GAR Hall – 3, Flynt Park and Pillars – 2, Horatio Lyon - 2, Churches - 2, S. Main Street School - 2, Peaked Mt, Norcross House, Squier Lumber Building and Tower, All undeveloped land, Cemeteries, Old mill site and dam on Reimers Road, Frietag Pond, Unitarian Church, ALL, Monson Academy Gym, House of Art, Cedar Swamp, Unsure of what they are....

17. Which of the following would you support to preserve open space and recreation land in Monson? (check all that you favor)

	#Yes	#No	#Maybe
Vote for town-supported land acquisition.	44	0	9
Vote for town-supported purchase of trail easements or greenways connecting neighborhoods, schools, downtown.	43	2	6
Donate land to the town.	30	16	8
Donate money to a “land acquisition fund” (tax deductible)	31	11	10
Restrict the future development of my land.	29	4	13
Sell land to the town at a “bargain” price.	23	20	10
Sell or donate a conservation restriction to protect my land from future development.	31	7	12
Support the Community Preservation Act	46	1	6

18. The term “residential growth” refers to new housing development. What residential

growth policy do you favor for the town? (Check all that you favor)

- 37** regulated growth, limiting the number of new houses built per year.
- 46** regulated growth, limiting location of new houses on slopes greater than 15% .
pay for runoff
- 42** regulated growth, limiting location of new houses to more than 200' from any wetlands.
(1 – 100')
- 43** regulated growth, limiting location of new houses on vista slopes (e.g. the view from Westview Farms, the east and west slopes along Main Street).
- 4** no changes in controlling residential growth in town.

Increase lot sizes in areas of town NOT on town water and sewer and underlain with glacial till.

19. To what extent did the following factors affect your decision to live in Monson?

1 – very important 2 – important 3 – somewhat important 4 – not important

Family	1	26	2	11	3	4	4	9
Job	1	15	2	4	3	10	4	15
Easy Commute	1	17	2	8	3	9	4	12
Cost of Living	1	13	2	10	3	8	4	14
Rural Character	1	37	2	8	3	2	4	3
Outdoor Recreation	1	15	2	12	3	11	4	7
Schools	1	9	2	14	3	7	4	12
Other Open Farmland to use								

22. How long have you lived in Monson?

Less than one year	3
1-5 years	2
5-10 years	5
10-20 years	18
20-30 years	6
30+ years	17

23. What is your age?

Under 18: **4** 18-29: **6** 30-50: **19** 51-65: **14** over 65: **10**

24. Approximately how many acres of land do you own in Monson?

None: **6** Less than 3 acres: **24** 3 and 5 acres: **4**

5 and 10 acres: **2** 10 and 20 acres: **6** more than 20 acres: **8**

Wildlife Assessment Procedures for Belted Kingfisher and Red Tailed Hawk

This section provides detailed information about the two indicator species chosen to estimate ecosystem health and wildlife habitat in Monson, as outlined in Section 4.4: Fisheries and Wildlife of the Open Space and Recreation Plan.

Gap Analysis

GAP analysis is a method of identifying gaps in the protection of biodiversity at state, regional and national scales. Although designed to identify “gaps” in the protective network, the data can serve numerous other purposes. In one sense, the data represent the first systematic compilation of data on biodiversity that transcends political boundaries. The data are a useful starting point for other efforts designed to protect biodiversity. Some important applications include the ability to note temporal and spatial change in the extent and distribution of vegetation types. When coupled with information on other stressing factors such as pollution or urban development, GAP analysis data layers can provide a stable planning environment for assessing impacts of human-induced change. GAP Analysis originated from the idea that a species-by-species approach to the loss of biodiversity is neither effective nor efficient. It ignores the principle reason for the loss of biodiversity, i.e., the continual loss and fragmentation of natural landscapes. Ideally, GAP Analysis data could provide a framework in which sound conservation planning will require, at an early stage, consideration of a nationwide network of core biodiversity management areas. Sustainable human uses would occur in other wild lands that serve to buffer and link core biodiversity areas. The accelerating loss of biodiversity places great premium on approaches like GAP Analysis. These approaches provide a logical basis for evaluating and, ultimately, protecting national biological diversity.

For this Open Space Plan we will be using GAP Analysis data to identify specific areas of the town of Monson in which may support two chosen target species, the Belted Kingfisher and the RedTailed Hawk. National Wetlands Inventory (NW1) data has been used to supplement the GAP data.

Choosing an Indicator Species

One way that managers have tried to preserve biodiversity and measure the viability of landscapes has been identifying indicator species. These species are chosen to represent a larger web of species dependent on particular ecosystems, and they are used as an indicator for an environmental standard by which other species can live. They reflect both qualitative and quantitative aspects of wildlife habitat. Qualitative aspects include the environmental standard or quality of the ecosystem, and quantitative aspects involve factors like the distribution of the species and its habitat. An indicator species should be native to the local ecosystem, and its presence should indicate that its habitat, and that of all other species for which it is considered the indicator, is a healthy one. The identification process may be long and complex, and is generally undertaken by wildlife biologists. The first step is to catalogue native species; then find out how they interact; and then if any of them can be considered an indicator for the ecosystem as a whole. The next step consists of a survey of areas and species which are not rare and are expected to indicate differences in habitat quality. The distribution

patterns of species should be ecologically grouped. For this study, the groups would be centered around riparian and woody upland habitat. Identification of an indicator species requires in-depth studies which may take many years and is beyond the scope of this study, but informs the process that was undertaken; choosing a target species.

Choosing a Target Species

The indicator species is an indicator for the presence and health of a certain habitat. A target species, on the other hand is a species that can provide information on a somewhat smaller scale. A target species for Monson should be one that requires one of the two common habitats of Monson, riparian or woody uplands. Other habits, movement, forage or mating patterns can be taken into account to predict what kind of information the species could provide. In some cases the goal of a project is to study populations of a distinct group of species within an ecosystem; in this case, an indicator species is not required. To guarantee that a species can live in a certain area, the presence of its habitat must be guaranteed. The habitat has to provide food, shelter and breeding sites. Secondly, access between patches of habitat must be available, to increase the likelihood that the met a population of a given species will be able to persist in the habitat. This can be done by protecting corridors between habitat patches. These corridors need not supply all the necessities of the habitat, as they only function as transitional space.

Choosing an isolation-sensitive species is a good way to gauge immigration potential for other species. If the most sensitive member of a group can survive, the others are likely to as well. The less abundant the species, the more appropriate it is as a target species. In most cases common species do not need to be considered, as their numbers provide them with a margin of safety and buffer them from chance environmental disturbances and random demographic or genetic extinction. High variability in population size/growth rate from year to year means increased extinction risk. Body size of the species is an important factor. In general, large animals require larger habitats, and are rarer than small animals. There is a fairly consistent relationship between size and density. Generally, the bigger the animal, the lower is its density and the bigger its home range. In addition, large animal species often require corridors over a broader range of reserve sizes. Where average patch size is small, corridors must be capable of transporting species that are normally quite abundant.

Target Species for Monson

In this study, birds were chosen as both target species as they are good indicators for air pollution, vegetation structure, and in the case of the kingfisher, water quality and aquatic habitat health. Birds are also more tolerant of some difficult conditions like fragmentation of habitats by roads. Choices thus arrived at for Monson are the belted kingfisher (*Megascops alpestris*) as a riparian target species and the Red Tailed Hawk (*Buteo jamaicensis*) as a woody upland target species. The Red Tailed Hawk is a common bird in the region. Its habitat needs and requirements are more variable than that of the Belted Kingfisher, however, it is considered a good target species for Monson. Its ability to prey on small mammals allows us to determine the health of the habitats it preys on and come to educated conclusions concerning the ecosystem as a whole. The combination of the wetland's Belted Kingfisher and the upland's Red Tailed Hawk as target species for Monson's wildlife habitat analysis is complete.

The areas covered by an indicator species should be protected. These areas are important to a healthy habitat and, if these areas are considered healthy, than the surrounding habitats can also be considered healthy.

Habitat Requirements of the Belted Kingfisher (*Megascops alcyon*)

The belted kingfisher (*Megascops alcyon*) is a bird of stream, lake, and pond edges-, it is also common on sea coasts and estuaries. It is found throughout North America, from western Alaska to the Gulf Coast and central Florida. Belted kingfishers feed primarily on fish, which they catch in clear water, but this diet can be extended to crayfish, crabs, mussels, frogs, turtles, insects, salamanders, and even young birds when fish is less available. Fish caught by the belted kingfisher are generally not larger than 4 inches in length. Fish longer than 5 inches are probably difficult to swallow. Belted kingfishers seem not to depend on a specific species of fish for food, but generally fish are caught in water less than two feet deep and swimming less than 0.5 foot below the surface. Belted kingfishers are able to fish in deeper waters, but less successful. The degree of wave action caused by wind also influences a kingfisher's sight of its prey. Shores which are exposed to severe wave action are avoided by the belted kingfisher, and fewer breeding sites are established on large rough lakes than along smaller, more protected bodies of water. Kingfishers also require good vantage points, in the form of high branches that overhang the water or other perches nearby. The fishing zone along the water's edge does not exceed 45 feet unless there are objects within the water where the belted kingfisher can perch and watch for prey. Existing vegetation also determines the amount of available foraging area. Belted kingfishers will be absent from areas which are overgrown with thick vegetation. Overhanging vegetation, less than three feet above the water, can obstruct the fishing activity of the belted kingfisher. Where shorelines are overgrown with low vegetation, beaver activity may increase kingfisher population as beaver dams open up reaches of streams and create ponds which extend the length of available shoreline. Kingfishers require a minimum of one mile of shoreline. Tree or shrub limbs or other open perches such as electrical wires or metal or wooden posts which overhang the water and can be used as observation points.

Shoreline without perches is sometimes acceptable, but then fishing requires hovering over the water to locate prey, an activity which requires a great deal more energy. The presence of riffles in streams is also significant. Several species of fish regularly gather and feed at the end of riffles, and optimum kingfisher habitat is provided when the length of stream habitat contains at least 30% riffles. Stream habitat without riffles can still be used but the fishing success is lower. On the other hand, habitat suitability decreases when riffles exceed 70% of the length of the stream. Belted kingfishers are solitary except during the breeding season, when pairs establish territories for fishing and nesting (Prose). Nests are three- to six-feet long burrows with a simple chamber at the end, excavated in vertical or overhanging soil banks. Factors influencing the suitability of the nest site are slope, vegetation cover, height, and soil texture. The banks should be mostly free of vegetative cover, roots and rocks. The entrance of the nest chamber is usually located at least five feet above level ground wherever possible, and banks higher than five feet are preferred. Nests may also be excavated in lower banks, but these are more vulnerable to predators or flood events. If the burrow is too close to the top of the bank, the nest chamber is vulnerable to collapse or digging predators.

Therefore the entrance to the chamber is usually located one to three feet below the top of the

bank, near the bottom of the organic soil layer. Soil characteristics also play an important role in the selection of nest sites. The material must be easy to excavate but stable enough to support the burrow and the chamber. Soils containing 70 - 79 sand and less than 15% clay provide optimum nest sites. The soil types which fulfill these criteria are sand, loamy sand, and sandy loam, all present in Monson.

Generally, belted kingfishers select a nest site as close to the fishing area as possible. Three kilometers is accepted as the maximum outer distance between nest site and fishing area. A lack of suitable nest sites may lead to unusual nest locations in very low banks, soil pockets in fallen tree roots, or decaying tree stumps. Human activity can provide nest sites in railroad and roadside cuts, large sawdust piles, and sand or gravel pits, but belted kingfishers have low tolerance for human disturbance during the nesting season.

Belted kingfishers are currently found all along the Monson and Connecticut Rivers, in the Westover Air Reserve Base in the swamp area that extends into Ludlow and around Cooley Pond and Brook in the Brimfield State Forest. The number of kingfishers in Monson at the present time is probably restricted more by their home range than by degraded habitat conditions, though they would benefit from improved water quality and the consequent increase of available fish.

Habitat Requirements for the Red-Tailed Hawk (*Buteo jamaicensis*)

The Red-tailed hawk was chosen as an indicator species for a number of reasons. They have a vast amount of habitat in the Town of Monson and they have been seen by many people. They are quite common throughout the town, however, they are not seen every day. Hawks are predators who are near the top of the food chain and they have a wide range of feeding and hunting areas. They are able to fly over developed areas and are less susceptible to developmental impacts upon its immediate environment. Another reason why the Red-tailed hawk was chosen is because it is very easy to identify. When it leaves its nest or turns while soaring high in the air, the broad, round tail shows a rich, russet red, hence the name. The Red-tailed hawk is the largest of the hawks and as with most raptors, the female is approximately one third larger than the male and they may have a wing span of up to fifty-six inches.

Adult Red-tailed hawks are found in the valley throughout most of the year. Even though they are not truly migratory, they have been known to adjust their locations to areas of the most food abundance. The appearance of a pair of Red-tailed hawks should be welcomed for the simple fact that they are the most beneficial of all hawks. There is conclusive evidence that about eighty-five to ninety percent of this bird's diet consists of small rodents. They kill an occasional bird and will infrequently take a snake or other reptile. For the most part they live mainly on rabbits, gophers, ground squirrels, mice, and other small rodents. When the hawks are young, because of their inexperience with hunting, they may be seen feeding on road-killed animals. They have also been known to kill cooped chickens. Even though this is a rare occurrence, the Red-tailed hawk is still known as the "chicken hawk," because of this, dead hawks hanging from fences and lying under trees and telephone poles are indicators that people still fail to see the economic and esthetic of hawks and other raptors. These people may also be unaware that these animals are protected by law so they kill them indiscriminately. In the rare case that a hawk actually takes a chicken or other

domestic animal, the hawk may be removed in accordance with current fish and wildlife regulations.

The Red-tail's nest is usually located about thirty-five to seventy-five feet above the ground in forks of large trees (oaks, maples, elms). The nesting tree is usually located in an open field or other semi-open area such as at the wooded edge of a field. This location allows the hawk to survey its hunting territory without having to actually fly around looking for food. It also helps that the hawk can see its food or prey from up to one half a mile away. The nests are large, flat, shallow, and made of sticks and twigs about one half inch in diameter. Both the male and the female assist in the construction of the nest. Nest sites can be used from year to year since there is strong evidence to support the fact that hawks mate for life (10- 15 years). If the nest is damaged by wind, snow or rain, layers of new material are added on each year. In summary, in order for a Red-tailed hawk to reside in a particular area, there must be a large expanse of open fields or meadows for hunting. There must be large, old trees in which they can build their nests. There must also be an abundant supply of small rodents, birds and reptiles on which they can feed.

GUIDE / USE KEYS FOR PRIVATE LANDS

The following appendix of the Chapter Lands found within Monson contain a "USE CODE". The codes are defined as follows:

CODE 6 – All lands that have been designated under Chapter 61 – Forest Land

601 – All lands designated under Chapter 61, as amended by Chapter 768 of the Acts of 1981 (Ten year management plan)

CODE 7 - All land that has been designated under Chapter 61A. Land devoted to this use must be in excess of 5 acres and meet other requirements of the lay. Chapter 81A – Agricultural, Horticultural Land.

712 – Truck Crops, Vegetables

713 – Field Crops – Hay, wheat

716 – Tillable Forage Cropland

717 – Productive Woodland – Christmas Trees, Woodlots

718 – Pastures

CODE 8 – All property that has been designated under Chapter 61B – Recreation Land.

801 – Hiking – trails or paths used for hiking

802 – Camping – areas with designated campsites for use on an overnight basis

803 – Nature study – areas specifically designated for nature study or observation

805 – Golfing – areas of land arranged for golf course

807 – Hunting – areas designated for the hunting of wildlife

812 – Picnicking – areas designated for picnicking

813 – Public non-commercial flying – areas designated for gliding or hang gliding

814 – Target Shooting – areas designated for target shooting such as archery, skeet, or approved fire arms

CHAPTER 61 FOREST LAND

Owner	Location	Acres	Use code	Condition	Recreation Potential	Public Access	Zoning	Degree of Protection
BAILEY, JAMES P & KIMBERLY L	CEDAR SWAMP RD.	23	601	Good	Medium	None	RR	Minimal
BATTIGE FAMILY TRUST	MAY HILL RD.	15	601	Good	Medium	None	RR	Minimal
BATTIGE, DOUGLAS E	MAY HILL RD.	18.79	601	Good	Medium	None	RR	Minimal
BATTIGE, KEITH S & KATHLEEN C	MAY HILL RD.	18.4	601	Good	Medium	None	RR	Minimal
CARPENTER REALTY LLC	TOWN FARM RD.	95.2	601	Excellent	High	None	RR	Good
CARPENTER REALTY LLC	TOWN FARM RD.	16	601	Excellent	High	None	RR	Good
CARPENTER, ROBERT W & BETTYLE	BEEBE RD.	35	601	Excellent	Medium	None	RR	Minimal
CLARK, EDWARD F & NANCY C	POND RD.	13.1	601	Excellent	High	None	RR	Good
COMPARETTO, BERYLE	HOSPITAL RD. (OFF)	4	601	Good	Medium	None	RR	Minimal
COMPARETTO, BERYLE	HOSPITAL RD. (OFF)	14	601	Good	Medium	None	RR	Minimal
COMPARETTO, BERYLE	HOSPITAL RD. (OFF)	10.5	601	Good	Medium	None	RR	Minimal
FITZGERALD, WILLIAM J	HOVEY RD.	21.9	601	Good	Medium	None	RR	Minimal
GARWACKI, WALTER K	MAXWELL RD.	53.9	601	Excellent	Medium	None	RR	Minimal
GOLA, JOHN E & EDNA R	BOGAN RD.	43.59	601	Good	Medium	None	RR	Minimal
GRASSETTI, CARLO A & EVELYN T	THAYER RD.	107.673	601	Excellent	Medium	None	RR	Minimal
GULBRANDSON, HANS C & STELLA V	BUTLER RD.	7.68	601	Excellent	Medium	None	RR	Minimal
GULBRANDSON, HANS C & STELLA V	BUTLER RD.	4.32	601	Excellent	Medium	None	RR	Minimal
GULBRANDSON, HANS C & STELLA V	HANCOCK RD.	10	601	Excellent	Medium	None	RR	Minimal
GULBRANDSON, HANS C & STELLA V	CROW HILL RD.	3	601	Excellent	Medium	None	RR	Minimal
GULBRANDSON, HANS C & STELLA V	HANCOCK RD.	10	601	Excellent	Medium	None	RR	Minimal
HIGGINS, ROSEMARY JEANNE DWYER	TOWN FARM RD.	40.58	601	Good	Medium	None	RR	Minimal
HIGGINS, ROSEMARY JEANNE DWYER	TOWN FARM RD.	9.45	601	Good	Medium	None	RR	Minimal
KING, BRIAN J & CAROLYN H	UPPER HAMPDEN RD.	14.12	601	Good	Medium	None	RR	Minimal
KOFKE, CRYSTAL L & EGGER, JAMES	SILVER ST.	20.65	601	Good	Low	None	RR	Minimal
KOZIOL, DAVID A & DORIS E	LAKE SHORE DR.	0.466	601	Excellent	High	None	RR	Good
KOZIOL, DAVID A & DORIS E	LAKE SHORE DR.	0.551	601	Excellent	High	None	RR	Good
KOZIOL, DAVID A. & DORIS E.	LAKE SHORE DR.	30.5	601	Excellent	High	None	RR	Good
LACOMBE, MARSHALL N & PATRICIA	BUTLER RD.	10.68	601	Excellent	High	None	RR	Minimal
LECOURS, GABRIEL R & JUDITH A	LOWER HAMPDEN RD.	87.49	601	Excellent	Medium	None	RR	Minimal
LEMON, WILLIAM F SR	WAID RD.	71.58	601	Excellent	Medium	None	RR	Minimal
MANCUSO, FRANK S JR & MAJORIE	HOSPITAL RD.	35.67	601	Good	Medium	None	RR	Minimal
MATROW, PETER & ELIZABETH	EAST HILL RD.	16.04	601	Excellent	Medium	None	RR	Minimal
MATROW, PETER F & ELIZABETH L	MUNN RD.	35.31	601	Excellent	Medium	None	RR	Minimal
MICHAUD, SHIRLEY B	STAFFORD RD.	58.8	601	Excellent	Medium	None	RR	Minimal
MILLER, DUANE & LAUREN B	MAY HILL RD.	0.172	601	Good	Medium	None	RR	Minimal

MILLER, DUANE & LAUREN B	MAY HILL RD.	1.065	601	Good	Medium	None	RR	Minimal
MILLER, DUANE & LAUREN B	MAY HILL RD.	16.778	601	Good	Medium	None	RR	Minimal
MUMFORD, JOHN OLIVER &	ALDRICH RD.	31.6	601	Excellent	Medium	None	RR	Minimal
MURPHY, JAMES S & MARGARET F	PECK BROS. RD.	70	601	Good	Medium	None	RR	Minimal
NOTHE, ELDON R	LOWER HAMPDEN RD.	17	601	Excellent	Medium	None	RR	Minimal
PETRAS, KENNETH J & DOROTHY J	MUNN RD.	10.73	601	Good	Medium	None	RR	Minimal
QUINLAN, BRIAN T & PENELOPE WESSON	REIMERS RD.	120.85	601	Excellent	High	None	RR	Fair
QUINLAN, BRIAN T & PENELOPE WESSON	REIMERS RD.	24.48	601	Excellent	High	None	RR	Fair
QUINLAN, BRIAN T & PENELOPE WESSON	STEBBINS RD.	84.37	601	Excellent	High	None	RR	Fair
RICHARDSON, ARTHUR M & CLARA L	CARPENTER RD.	68.1	601	Excellent	High	None	RR	Good
ROBBINS, SHIRLEY A	BUNYAN RD.	30	601	Excellent	Medium	None	RR	Minimal
ROWE, WILLIAM L JR	OLD REED RD.	31	601	Excellent	Medium	None	RR	Minimal
ROYCE, PHILLIP R	CEDAR SWAMP RD.	16.623	601	Good	Medium	None	RR	Minimal
ROYCE, PHILLIP R	WALES RD.	9.524	601	Good	Medium	None	RR	Minimal
ROYCE, PHILLIP R	WALES RD.	11.76	601	Good	Medium	None	RR	Minimal
SCHERMERHORN, SANDRA	BENNETT RD.	56.5	601	Excellent	Medium	None	RR	Minimal
SHEPARD, JEAN E III & CHARLES	REIMERS RD.	26	601	Excellent	High	None	RR	Good
SHEPARD, JEAN E III & CHARLES	SILVER ST.	127	601	Excellent	High	None	RR	Fair
SPRINGFIELD SPORTSMEN'S CLUB	WOOD HILL RD.	140	601	Excellent	High	None	RL	Fair
SPRINGFIELD SPORTSMEN'S CLUB	WOOD HILL RD.	115	601	Excellent	High	None	RL	Fair
STAMM, JAMES W &	BUTLER RD.	10.22	601	Excellent	Medium	None	RR	Minimal
STEPHENS, BARRY M & SHARON E	BUTLER RD.	63	601	Excellent	Medium	None	RR	Minimal
STEPHENS, BARRY M & SHARON	BUTLER RD.	19.1	601	Excellent	Medium	None	RR	Minimal
STODDARD, PHILIP B	BENNETT RD.	50.3	601	Excellent	Medium	None	RR	Minimal
SWEITZER, CRAIG	HANCOCK RD.	58.016	601	Excellent	Medium	None	RR	Minimal
SWEITZER, PATRICIA A	BRADWAY RD.	21.39	601	Excellent	Medium	None	RR	Minimal
TONOLI, LINDA J & ROBINSON, CRAIG D	CEDAR SWAMP RD.	11.5	601	Excellent	Medium	None	RR	Minimal
WALETKUS, STANLEY & MARY ELLEN	HOVEY RD.	17.65	601	Good	Medium	None	RR	Minimal
WALETKUS, STANLEY & MARY ELLEN	HOVEY RD.	2.26	601	Good	Medium	None	RR	Minimal

CHAPTER 61A FARM LAND

Owner	Location	Acres	Use code	Condition	Recreation Potential	Public Access	Zoning	Degree of Protection
AROOTH, JOHN M & JAMES E	UPPER PALMER RD.	106.62	713	Good	Medium	None	RV/RR	Minimal
BARNES, ROBERT T & FAYE E	MOULTON HILL RD.	15.08	713	Good	Medium	None	RR	Minimal
BILTON, MARK A & ROBERT A C/O	STAFFORD HOLLOW RD.	70	713	Good	Medium	None	RR	Minimal
BOGDANOV'S, JANIS	PECK BROS. RD.	154.62	713	Good	Medium	None	RR	Minimal
CARRIGAN, JUDITH	LOWER HAMPDEN RD.	58.58	713	Good	Medium	None	RR	Minimal
COLLING, HELEN F	BOGAN RD.	151.12	713	Good	Medium	None	RR	Minimal

CHAPTER 61A FARM LAND

Owner	Location	Acres	Use	Condition	Recreation	Public	Zoning	Degree of
FURGAL, STELLA F	BUMSTEAD RD.	130.3	713	Good	Medium	None	RR	Minimal
HULSE, CHARLES E & ENID L	MAY HILL RD.	194	713	Good	Medium	None	RR	Minimal
LHR REALTY TRUST / B KAVANEY	LOWER HAMPDEN RD.	160.45	713	Good	Medium	None	RR	Minimal
MURPHY, WILLIAM F, THOMAS F,	LOWER HAMPDEN RD.	130.11	713	Good	Medium	None	RR	High-APR
NOTHE, ELAINE A	LOWER HAMPDEN RD.	27	713	Good	Medium	None	RR	Minimal
PLUMLEY, PHILLIP D & LILLIAN R	MOULTON RD.	33.02	713	Good	Medium	None	RR	Minimal
PLUMLEY, PHILLIP D & LILLIAN R	MOULTON HILL RD.	24.79	713	Good	Medium	None	RR	Minimal
SKALBITE, JANIS	CEDAR SWAMP RD.	124	713	Good	Medium	None	RR	Fair
VAILL, BERNICE P	BRIMFIELD RD.	34.56	713	Good	Medium	None	RR	Fair
AROOTH, JOHN M & JAMES E	UPPER PALMER RD.	5.8	716	Good	Medium	None	RV/RR	Minimal
AROOTH, JOHN M & JAMES E	MACOMBER RD.	43.96	716	Good	Medium	None	RR	Minimal
AROOTH, JOHN M & JAMES E	MACOMBER RD.	40	716	Good	Medium	None	RR	Minimal
BRAZAS, ROBERT N & MARY ANN	MUNN RD.	57.62	716	Good	Medium	None	RR	Minimal
CAREY, ROBERT M & THERESA E	ALDRICH RD.	26.249	716	Good	Medium	None	RR	Minimal
CARPENTER REALTY LLC	TOWN FARM RD.	66.7	716	Good	Medium	None	RR	Good
GOLA, JOHN E & EDNA R	BOGAN RD.	23	716	Good	Medium	None	RR	Minimal
KORAN, SAMUEL E JR & SHEILA M	EAST HILL RD.	218.81	716	Excellent	Medium	Good	RR	High-APR
KRUPCZAK, RICHARDS & THERESA	WILBRAHAM RD.	88.4	716	Good	High	Good	RR	High-APR
MILLER, RAYMOND K	HOVEY RD.	8	716	Good	Medium	None	RR	Minimal
VAILL, DONALD C & JAMES B	BRIMFIELD RD.	64	716	Excellent	Medium	None	RR	Fair
VAILL, PHILA K	BRIMFIELD RD.	10.5	716	Excellent	Medium	None	RR	Fair
VAN DE GEER, JUDY	MUNN RD.	14	716	Good	Medium	None	RR	Minimal
NOTHE, DONALD F & ELDON R	LOWER HAMPDEN RD.	55.8	717	Good	Medium	None	RR	Minimal
NOTHE, DONALD F & ELDON R	LOWER HAMPDEN RD.	18	717	Good	Medium	None	RR	Minimal
BERUBE, FLORENCE A	BUTLER RD.	7	718	Good	Medium	None	RR	Minimal
BILTON, MARK A & ROBERT A JR	STAFFORD HOLLOW RD.	6.23	718	Good	Medium	None	RR	Minimal
HARRINGTON, LEONARD C & ROSLYN	BUTLER RD.	0	718	Good	High	None	RR	High
HARRINGTON, LEONARD C & ROSLYN	BUTLER RD.	24	718	Good	High	None	RR	High
HULSE, CHARLES E & ENID L	MAY HILL RD.	21	718	Good	Medium	None	RR	Minimal
MILLER, ROY E & LYLE R	COTE RD.	16.42	718	Good	Medium	None	RR	Minimal
PELLETIER, JOHN E & DEBORAH	MUNN RD.	17.71	718	Good	Medium	None	RR	Minimal
PELLETIER, JOHN E & DEBORAH	MUNN RD.	1.53	718	Good	Medium	None	RR	Minimal
PLUMLEY, PHILLIP D & LILLIAN D	WALES RD.	5.04	718	Good	Medium	None	RR	Minimal
ROBBINS, JOHN F	BEEBE RD.	192	718	Good	Medium	None	RR	Minimal
WESTVIEW FARM INC	EAST HILL RD.	366.32	718	Excellent	High	Good	RR	Minimal
WESTVIEW FARMS INC	EAST HILL RD.	12.45	718	Excellent	High	Good	RR	Minimal
BEAUDOIN, RAYMOND E & CATHERINE	WILBRAHAM RD.	0	722	Good	Medium	None	RR	Minimal

CHAPTER 61B RECREATION

Owner	Location	Acres	Use code	Condition	Recreation Potential	Public Access	Zoning	Degree of Protection
BEAN, DONALD ROY	SUTCLIFFE RD.	84.54	802	Excellent	High	Good	RR	Minimal
BERUBE, FLORENCE A	BUTLER RD.	91.22	807	Excellent	Medium	None	RR	Minimal
BOOKER, JOHN B & SUSAN J	SILVER ST.	66.23	801	Excellent	Medium	None	RR	Minimal
CARPENTER REALTY LLC	TOWN FARM RD.	32.97	802	Excellent	High	Good	RR	Good
CARDANO, RICHARD A & MARILYN	BUMSTEAD RD.	75	803	Good	Medium	None	RR	Minimal
CARRARA, EVAN G & KAREN	COTE RD.	34.62	801	Excellent	Medium	None	RR	Minimal
ELLIOTT, RICHARD D	BUTLER RD.	37.213	801	Excellent	Medium	None	RR	High
EVANS, WAYNE A & LAURIE W	EAST HILL/MUNN RDS.	29.5	803	Excellent	Medium	None	RR	Fair
GARNER, RICHARD P & KATHLEEN	WILBRAHAM RD.	39.07	801	Good	Medium	None	RR	Minimal
HATCH, LINDA N	MUNN RD.	57.4	807	Excellent	Medium	None	RR	Minimal
HENGVELD, TARA &	BUTLER RD.	21.1	801	Good	Medium	None	RR	Minimal
HENGVELD, TARA &	BUTLER RD.	1.428	807	Good	Medium	None	RR	Minimal
HENGVELD, TARA &	BUTLER RD.	0.972	807	Good	Medium	None	RR	Minimal
HOOTON, KEITH L	STATE AVE. (OFF)	21.08	801	Good	Medium	None	RV	Minimal
HOOTON, KEITH L	FERN HILL RD.	1.37	801	Good	Medium	None	RV	Minimal
HOOTON, KEITH L	FERN HILL RD.	1.37	801	Good	Medium	None	RV	Minimal
HOOTON, KEITH L	FERN HILL RD.	21.27	801	Good	Medium	None	RV	Minimal
KANE, JOHN J & KANE-BOWER, LAURIE A	LOWER HAMPDEN RD	169.91	801	Good	Medium	None	RR	Minimal
KORTEKAMP, JACK & GERALDINE	BUTLER RD.	3.36	803	Good	Medium	None	RR	Minimal
KORTEKAMP, JACK, GERALDINE & TODD	BUTLER RD.	5.535	803	Good	Medium	None	RR	Minimal
MILLER, RAYMOND K	HOVEY RD.	18.09	801	Good	High	None	RR	Minimal
MILLER, RAYMOND	HOVEY RD.	7.39	802	Good	Medium	None	RR	Minimal
MILLER MEMORIAL ASSOCIATION	HOVEY RD.	19.04	812	Good	High	Good	RR	Minimal
NICHOLS, LEE V & ROBERTA R	COTE RD.	55	803	Good	Medium	None	RR	Minimal
PHILLIPS, STEPHEN L	UPPER HAMPDEN RD.	37.84	803	Good	Medium	None	RR	Minimal
RICHMOND, J A & BROOKS, C	REIMERS RD.	164.86	801	Excellent	Medium	None	RR	Minimal
ROBINSON, CRAIG D & LINDA TONOLI	CEDAR SWAMP RD.	22.21	802	Excellent	Medium	None	RR	Minimal
SPELKO, JOHN T JR & LINDA A	REIMERS RD.	92.98	801	Excellent	Medium	None	RR	Minimal
SPRINGFIELD SPORTSMENS CLUB INC	WOOD HILL RD.	2.63	814	Excellent	High	None	RL	Minimal
SPRINGFIELD SPORTSMENS CLUB INC	WOOD HILL RD.	58.62	814	Excellent	High	Good	RL	Minimal
SPRINGFIELD SPORTSMANS CLUB INC	WOOD HILL RD.	34.78	801	Excellent	High	Good	RL	Fair

Public, Non-Profit and State Lands

Location	Owner	Acres	Use Code	Condition	Recreation Potential	Public Access	Zoning	Degree of Protection	ADA access
Conant Brook Dam	Army Corp of Engineers	437.9	900	Excellent	High	Excellent	RL	Perpetuity	low
Brimfield State Forest	DCR	328.4	901	Excellent	High	Excellent	RL	Medium	low
State Avenue	Monson Developmental Center	623.0	901	Good	High	Good	RL	Good	some
Aldrich Road	Town of Monson - Cemetary	0.3	903				RR	Perpetuity	low
Bennett Road	Town of Monson - Cemetary	0.3	903				RR	Perpetuity	low
Bethany Road	Town of Monson	3.3	903	Good	Medium	Fair	RV	Medium	low
Bethany Road	Town of Monson	0.3	903		None	None	I	Medium	low
Bethany Road	Town of Monson	0.2	903		None	None	I	Medium	low
Bethany Road	Town of Monson - Cemetary	1.0	903				RV	Perpetuity	low
Bethany Road	Monson Water Department	3.4	903	Good	None	None	RV	Perpetuity	low
Bunyan Road	Monson Conservation Commission	10.0	903	Excellent	Medium	None	RR	Perpetuity	low
Bunyan Rd Well	Monson Water Department	4.2	903		None	None	RR	Perpetuity	low
Bunyan Rd Well	Monson Water Department	12.4	903		None	None	RR	Perpetuity	low
Bunyan Rd Well	Monson Water Department	8.3	903		None	None	RR	Perpetuity	low
Butler Road	Town of Monson/CR TTOR	30.6	903	Excellent	High	Good	RR	Perpetuity	low
Butler Road	Monson ConCom - Larson	65.4	903	Excellent	High	Good	RR	Perpetuity	low
Butler Road	CR Town of Monson	44.5	903	Excellent	High	Good	RR	Perpetuity	low
Butler Road	Town of Monson - Cemetary	0.9	903				RR	Perpetuity	low
Cedar Swamp Road	Monson ConCom-self help	18.7	903	Excellent	High	Excellent	RR	Perpetuity	low
Cedar Swamp Road	Monson Conservation Commission	56.7	903	Excellent	High	Excellent	RR	Perpetuity	low
Chestnut Street	Town of Monson	0.6	903	Fair	None		RV	Perpetuity	low
Childs Road	Town of Monson	0.1	903	Fair	None		RR	Perpetuity	low
Dorset Road	Monson Conservation Commission	13.5	903	Excellent	None	None	RR	Perpetuity	low
East Hill Road	Monson Conservation Commission	28.7	903	Excellent	High	Fair	RR	Perpetuity	low
Ely Road	Keep Homestead - APR	51.1	903	Excellent	High	Excellent	RV	Perpetuity	low
Ely Road	Keep Homestead	15.8	903	Excellent	High	Excellent	RV	Perpetuity	low

Location	Owner	Acres	Use Code	Condition	Recreation Potential	Public Access	Zoning	Degree of Protection	ADA access
Fern Hill Road	Monson ConCom - Coen	96.7	903	Good	Medium	None	RV	Perpetuity	low
Flynt Park	Town of Monson	126.1	903	Fair	High	Good	RR	Perpetuity	low
High Street	Town of Monson	0.6	903	Fair	None		RV	Perpetuity	low
Hilltop Drive	Town of Monson	0.2	903	Fair	None		RR	Perpetuity	low
Homer Dr/Margaret St	Monson ConCom - Magill	10.9	903	Good	High	Excellent	RR	Perpetuity	low
Hospital Road	Town of Monson	0.8	903	Fair	None		RR	Perpetuity	low
Lakeshore Drive	Town of Monson	0.7	903	Fair	Low		RR	Perpetuity	low
Lakeshore Drive	Town of Monson	0.3	903	Fair	Low		RR	Perpetuity	low
Lakeshore Drive	Town of Monson	0.4	903	Fair	Low		RR	Perpetuity	low
Lakeside Drive	Town of Monson	0.3	903	Fair	Low		RR	Perpetuity	low
Main Street	Town of Monson	1.2	903				GC	Medium	low
Main Street	Town of Monson	4.8	903				CC	Fair	low
Main Street	Monson Parks and Recreation	10.0	903	Excellent	High	Excellent	CC	Perpetuity	high
Main Street	Town of Monson - Cemetary	0.4	903				CC	Perpetuity	low
Margaret Street	Monson ConCom - Kolowrat	4.9	903	Excellent	High	Excellent	RR	Perpetuity	low
Margaret Street	Town of Monson - Schools	20.0	903	Excellent	High	Excellent	RR	Fair	high
May Hill Road	Town of Monson - Cemetary	1.0	903				RR	Perpetuity	low
Moulton Hill	Town of Monson - Cemetary	2.0	903				RV	Perpetuity	low
Old Stafford Road	Town of Monson	0.8	903	Fair	None		RV	Minimal	low
Old Wales Road	Monson Water Department	0.5	903		None	None	RR	Perpetuity	low
Palmer Road	Monson Water Department	10.7	903		None	None	RV	Perpetuity	low
Park Ave	Town of Monson	0.2	903				RV	Perpetuity	low
Park Ave	Monson Parks and Recreation	0.5	903				RV	Perpetuity	low
Park Road	Monson P & R - Dr. Rogers	10.0	903	Excellent	High	Excellent	RR	Perpetuity	low
Sand Hill Road	Town of Monson	0.5	903	Fair	None		RR	Perpetuity	low
Silver Street	Monson ConCom self help	38.7	903	Excellent	High	Excellent	RR	Perpetuity	low
Stanton Road	Monson Conservation Commission	34.0	903	Excellent	Medium	Fair	RR	Perpetuity	low
Thompson Street	Town of Monson - Cemetary	12.5	903				RV	Perpetuity	low

Location	Owner	Acres	Use Code	Condition	Recreation Potential	Public Access	Zoning	Degree of Protection	ADA access
Thompson Street	Town of Monson -Schools	50.5	903		High	Excellent	RV	Good	high
Upper Palmer Road	Monson Conservation Commission	0.4	903	Fair	Low		RR	Perpetuity	low
Upper Palmer Road	Monson ConCom - Teatrault-Brown	83.2	903	Excellent	Medium	None	RR	Perpetuity	low
Upper Palmer Road	Town of Monson	3.4	903				RR	Fair	low
Upper Palmer Road	Town of Monson	1.0	903				RR	Fair	low
Wales Road	Town of Monson - Cemetary	0.3	903				RR	Perpetuity	low
Warriner Road	Monson Conservation Commission	30.6	903	Good	Low	None	RR	Perpetuity	low
Washington Street	Monson Parks and Recreation	8.1	903	Fair	Medium	Excellent	RV	Perpetuity	low
Wilbraham Road	Monson ConCom - Gerrish south	10.7	903	Excellent	Medium	None	RR	Perpetuity	low
Wilbraham Road	Monson ConCom - Gerrish north	21.9	903	Excellent	Medium	None	RR	Perpetuity	low
Butler Road	Gift to TTOR / CR Monson	56.8	905	Excellent	High	Excellent	RR	Perpetuity	low
Butler Road	Purchase, TTOR/ CR Monson	58.0	905	Excellent	High	Excellent	RR	Perpetuity	low
Butler Road	Gift to TTOR, CR Town of Monson	132.7	905	Excellent	High	Excellent	RR	Perpetuity	low
Butler Road	Gift to TTOR, CR Town of Monson	31.4	905	Excellent	High	Excellent	RR	Perpetuity	low
Butler Road	Elliot lease to TTOR	35.2	905	Excellent	High	Excellent	RR	Perpetuity	low
Butler Road	Gift to TTOR from Norcross	18.7	905	Excellent	High	Good	RR	Perpetuity	low
Cedar Swamp Road	Norcross Wildlife Foundation	149.5	905	Excellent	High	Good	RR	Perpetuity	low
Crow Hill Road	Norcross Wildlife Foundation	535.1	905	Excellent	High	None	RR	Perpetuity	low
East Hill Road	Norcross Wildlife Foundation	115.4	905	Excellent	High	None	RR	Perpetuity	low
High Street	Monson Free Library	1.1	905				RV	Perpetuity	high
Hovey Road	Norcross Wildlife Foundation	189.4	905	Excellent	Medium	None	RR	Perpetuity	low
Main Street	Monson Historical Society	2.4	905				CC	Perpetuity	low
Main Street	Monson Council on Aging	1.3	905				CC	Perpetuity	low
Moulton Hill/Childs Rd	Norcross Wildlife Foundation	546.9	905	Excellent	Medium	None	RR	Perpetuity	low
Norcross	Norcross Wildlife Foundation	2027.3	905	Excellent			RR	Perpetuity	low
Palmer Road	Post 241	10.0	905				GC	Minimal	low
Peaked Mt. Summit	Trade, TTOR	2.4	905	Excellent	High	Excellent	RR	Perpetuity	low
Pond Road	Norcross Wildlife Foundation	156.3	905	Excellent	Low	None	RR	Perpetuity	low

Location	Owner	Acres	Use Code	Condition	Recreation Potential	Public Access	Zoning	Degree of Protection	ADA access
Reimers Road	Norcross Wildlife Foundation	87.5	905	Excellent	Low	None	RR	Perpetuity	low
Thayer Road	Wilbraham Conservation Trust	10.5	905	Excellent		None	RR	Perpetuity	low
Waid Road	Cross Mem.-Opacum Land Trust	2.3	905	Excellent	Medium		RR	Perpetuity	low
Bethany Road	St. Patricks Church	22.0	906				RV	Perpetuity	high
Bliss Street	Masonic Temple	1.8	906		None		I	Perpetuity	high
Bliss Street	Masonic Temple	2.8	906		None		RR	Perpetuity	low
Crest Road	United Methodist Church	0.6	906				RV	Perpetuity	low
Ely Road	First Church of Monson	1.5	906				RV	Perpetuity	low
Green Street	St. Patricks Church	1.0	906				RV	Perpetuity	low
High Street	First Church of Monson	3.8	906				RV/CC	Perpetuity	high
Main Street	United Methodist Church	0.3	906				CC	Perpetuity	high
Main Street	Unitarian Universalist Church	0.5	906				CC	Perpetuity	high
Main Street	Christian Church	0.7	906				CC	Fair	high
Silver Street	Silver Street Congregational Church	1.2	906				RR	Perpetuity	low
Flynt Avenue	Monson Housing Authority	0.3	908				RV	Minimal	low
Lower Hampden Ave.	Monson Housing Authority	0.6	908				RV	Minimal	low
Main Street	Monson Housing Authority	0.4	908				RV	Minimal	no
Main Street	Monson Housing Authority	0.3	908				RV	Minimal	low
State Street	Monson Housing Authority	4.7	908				RV	Minimal	low